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SURE METHODS OF ATTAINING A LONG AND HEALTHFUL LIFE.

Thomas Clarke
Knedlington

With Means of correcting a

BAD CONSTITUTION.

Written originally in ITALIAN,

BY LEWIS CORNARO,
a Noble Venetian, when he was near
an Hundred Years of Age.

EDINBURGH:

Printed by WAL. RUDDIMAN Jun.
in Forreſter's-wynd, Lawn market.

M,DCC,LXX.

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THE PREFACE.

LONG life is one of the greateſt bleſſings that we mortals can enjoy; it being what all men naturally deſire and wiſh for. Nay, when men are come to the longeſt date, they deſire yet to live a little longer. But, however, health is that which ſweetens all our other enjoyments, without which the longeſt life would be no more than a living death, and render us burdenſome to ourſelves, and troubleſome to all about us.

But though life be ſo deſirous, and health ſo great a bleſſing, yet how much is both the one and the other undervalued by the greateſt part of mankind? whatever they may think or ſay of the ineſtimable value of thoſe precious jewels, yet it is plain, by their practice, that they ſlight and deſpiſe both; and the greateſt part of mankind are hardly ſenſible of the worth of health, 'till they come in good earneſt to be deprived of it.

How many men do we daily ſee, by their intemperance and exceſs, lay the ſeeds of future diſtempers, which either carry them off in the flower of their age, which is the caſe of moſt; or elſe render their old age, if they arrive to it, uneaſy and uncomfortable? and though we ſee others daily drop into the grave before us, and are very apt, with juſtice, to aſcribe the loſs of of our friends to their living too faſt; yet we cannot forbear treading in the ſame ſteps, and following the ſame courſes, 'till at laſt, by a

violent and unnatural death, we are hurried off the ſtage of life after them.

What the noble CORNARO obſerves of the Italians of his time, may very well be applied to this nation at preſent, *viz.* "that we are 'not contented with a plain bill of fare; that 'we ranſack the elements of earth, air, and 'water, for all ſorts of creatures to gratify our 'wanton and luxurious appetites: that as if 'our tables were too narrow and ſhort to hold 'our proviſions, we heap them up upon one ano-'ther: And laſtly, that, to create a falſe appe-'tite, we rack our cooks inventions for new 'ſauces and provocatives, to make the ſuperflu-'ous morſels go down with the greater guſt."

This is not any groundleſs obſervation, but it carries an experimental conviction along with it. Look into all our public entertainments and feaſts, and ſee whether luxury and intemperance be not too predominant in them. Men, upon ſuch occaſions, think it juſtifiable to give themſelves the looſe, to eat heartily, and to drink deeply; and many think themſelves not welcome, or well entertained, if the maſter of the feaſt be ſo wiſe as not to give them an occaſion of loſing the man, and aſſuming the beaſt.

In oppoſition to ſuch a practice, and to ſhew the good effects of a ſober and regular life, was the deſign of CORNARO in writing the enſuing treatiſe, as is alſo ours in handing it into the world in an Engliſh dreſs. What he wrote was from his own experience, and he felt the benefit of that regimen which he preſcribes to others; and they may meet with the ſame ſucceſs, if, with prudence

prudence and caution, they apply it to themselves.

It cannot, indeed, be expected, that every man should tie himself up strictly to the observation of the same rules in his diet, as this noble Venetian followed; since the variety of climates, constitution, age, and other circumstances, may admit of great variations. But this we may assert as a reasonable, general, undeniable maxim, founded upon reason, and the nature of things; that for the preservation of health, and the prolonging a man's life, it is necessary that he eat and drink no more than what is sufficient to support his natural constitution: and, on the contrary, whatsoever he eats or drinks beyond that, is superfluous, and tends to the feeding of the corrupt vicious humours, which will at last, tho' they may be stifled for a time, break out into a flame, and burn the man quite down, or else leave him like a ruined and shattered building.

This general maxim which we have laid down, will hold good with respect to men of all ages and constitutions, and under whatsoever climate they live; if they have but courage to make a due application of it, and to lay a restraint upon their unreasonable appetites.

After all, we will not, we dare not warrant, that the most strict and sober life, will secure a man from all diseases, or prolong his days to that age which Signor CORNARO promises them, by his own experience. Natural infirmities and weaknesses, which a man brings along with him into the world, which he derived from his parents, and could not avoid, may make him sickly and unhealthful, notwithstanding all his

care and precaution; and outward accidents (from which no man is free) may cut off the thread of life before it be half spun out. There is no fencing against the latter of these; but as to the former, a man may, in some measure, correct and amend them, by a sober and regular life. In fine, let a man's life be longer or shorter, yet sobriety and temperance render it pleasant and delightful. One that is sober, though he live but thirty or forty years, yet lives long, and enjoys all his days, having a free and clear use of all his faculties: whilst the man that gives himself up to excess, and lays no restraint upon his appetites, though he prolongs his days to threescore or fourscore years (which is next to a miracle), yet is his life but one continued dozing slumber; his head being always full of fumes; the powers of his soul cloudy and dark; the organs of his body weak and worn out; and neither of them fit to discharge the proper offices of a rational creature.

Now, let any one upon serious reflection consider, which is most eligible, a sober and regular, or an intemperate and disorderly course of life. Certainly there is no great difficulty in determining this question; the main business is, to persuade men to put into practice, what they are really in their own consciences convinced to to be necessary for them to do. And this might easily be done, were not men bore down, even against their own sentiments, by prejudice, custom and example. It is therefore requisite, in order to the farther recommending of sobriety, to take off, and answer some objections (not taken notice of by CORNARO), which some persons of our

our days make use of to justify their contrary practice.

Some of the wits of the age tell us, "that 'wine, even drank to excess, enlivens the fancy, 'and infuses bold and great thoughts into a 'man, makes his writings brisk and airy, a plea-'sure to himself, and no less delightful to others; 'whilst others, pretending to sobriety, are dull 'and flat in all their performances, and nothing 'but what is phlegmatic and heavy is the pro-'duct of their genius."

In answer to this, it may be said, that this their assertion is apparently false. What the effects of these spirits of wine and a heated brain have been, and how much the modern wits have improved by such a method, is evident by the many loose and profane plays and poems, which they have of late years published. There is, indeed, in them a flashiness, sprightliness, and unusual boldness of thought; even the outbraving and ridiculing of all that is good and sacred. But call you this refined wit? no, it is fool hardiness, profaneness, and blasphemy; such as would startle a sober man to hear or read, and would even make the authors themselves to blush, were they not arrived to such a degree of impudence, "not to be ashamed." The very air of those writings informs you, that they were drawn off fron the "lees of wine:" that a debauched and licentious conversation gave them their ideas of men and manners, so forced, monstrous, and shocking to nature. Besides, take those witty men out of their own way, and they are as dull and heavy as any other animals: witness those paltry defences, which have hitherto

hitherto been made for the Engliſh ſtage, in oppoſition to Mr Collier's view; wherein the poets have wretchedly betrayed their cauſe, and the force of wit and wine has not been able to withſtand a ſober and ſolid argument. But the caſe is not ſo with men that obſerve a due regimen in what they eat or drink: whatever the wits may falſly repreſent, yet we may venture to aſſert, that the beſt diſcourſes which have appeared in print, upon pious, rational, and noble ſubjects, have been the product of cool, calm, and ſober thoughts: no heat, no flaſh, but true and ſolid arguments appear in them; and how unpleaſant and dull ſoever they may ſeem to ſome of a vitiated and prejudiced temper of mind, yet, by the wiſer part of mankind (on whoſe judgment one ought chiefly to rely), they will be always had in juſt reſpect and eſteem.

It is further urged by ſome others, who have abſolutely abandoned themſelves to ſenſual pleaſures; "that it is better to live a few 'years, in the full enjoyment of the good things 'of this world, than to ſpend a century in a 'continual reſtraint laid upon their appetites." But the extravagancy of theſe men appears at firſt view; "eat, drink, and be merry," is all they aim at; and they do not care how ſoon their ſouls ſhall be required of them: they are ſtrangers to the pleaſures which health and good old age can afford to men, and therefore live apace; though, in truth, they do not live at all to any purpoſe. By their exceſſes and extravagancies, they render themſelves uſeleſs to themſelve s and others. They are always in a ferment, and never come to cool and ſedate thoughts

thoughts of things. Hence it was, that a noble peer of this kingdom, one of a large genius, and quick parts, was hurried by an intemperate sort of life to such extravagancies, as, for several years, not to be his own man; and tho' he lived not half the age of a man, yet, by his excesses, he did not enjoy the half of those days wherein he lived. He perverted those parts which God had given him, and made them the pandars of vice and debauchery; which occasioned a noble friend of his to reflect upon him in these words:

Such nauseous songs, by a late author made,
Draw an unwilling censure on his shade.
Not that warm thoughts of the approaching joy,
Can shock the nicest, or the chastest cloy:
But obscene words, too gross to raise desire,
Like heaps of embers, only quench the fire.

Marquis of Normanby's *Essay on Heroic Poetry.*

But not to insist any longer upon the recommendation of a sober and regular course of life, which is the design of CORNARO's treatise, and which no wise man can but approve of, we shall only give you some short account of this translation of it.

The first chapter was formerly published in English, in the small tract of Lellius concerning health; but so far mutilated, that it is not the same with the original, and falls very much short of it. How it came to pass that it was thus lamely handed into the world, we shall not now enquire; but it may very fairly serve as a justification for our new version of that discourse; especially

eſpecially ſince we have rendered the whole, and joined three other diſcourſes with other matters relating thereto. It was thought proper to leave out ſome few things, which being writ by a ſtaunch Roman Catholic, ſeemed to reflect upon the Proteſtant religion: but, bating this, you have the whole of CORNARO's treatiſes, digeſted into ſo many diſtinct chapters.

But not to weary our reader with too long a preface; we ſhall recommend him to the peruſal of the book itſelf, and to the practice of the rules contained therein, according as his own diſcretion ſhall direct him; not queſtioning, but that, upon a due experience, he will thank CORNARO for the original, and us for the verſion of it.

VALE.

SPECTATOR, Vol. 3. No. 195.

THE moſt remarkable inſtance of the efficacy of temperance towards the procuring of long life, is what we meet with in a little book publiſhed by LEWIS CORNARO the Venetian; which I the rather mention, becauſe it is of undoubted credit, as the late Venetian ambaſſador, who was of the ſame family, atteſted more than once in converſation, when he reſided in England. CORNARO, who was the author of the little treatiſe I am mentioning, was of an infirm conſtitution till about forty, when, by obſtinately perſiſting in an exact courſe of temperance, he recovered a perfect ſtate of health; inſomuch that at fourſcore he publiſhed his book, which has been tranſlated into Engliſh, under the title of "Sure and certain methods of attaining a long and healthy life." He lived to give a third or fourth edition of it; and, after having paſſed his hundredth year, died without pain or agony, and like one who falls aſleep. The treatiſe I mention, has been taken notice of by ſeveral eminent authors, and is written with ſuch a ſpirit of chearfulneſs, religion, and good ſenſe, as are the natural concomitants of temperance and ſobriety. The mixture of the old man in it, is rather a recommendation than a diſcredit to it.

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THE SURE WAY OF ATTAINING A LONG AND HEALTHFUL LIFE.

CHAP. I.

Of a Sober and Regular Life.

NOTHING is more certain, than that cuſtom becomes a ſecond nature, and has a great influence upon our bodies. Nay, it has too often more power over the mind, than reaſon itſelf. The honeſt man alive, in keeping company with libertines, by degrees forgets the maxims of probity, which he had imbibed from the very breaſt, and gives himſelf the looſe in thoſe vices which he ſees practiſed. If he be ſo happy as to relinquiſh that bad company, and to meet with better, virtue will triumph in its turn: and he inſenſibly reſumes the wiſdom which he had abandoned. In a word, all the alterations which we perceive in the temper, carriage, and manners of

moſt men, have ſcarce any other foundation, but the force and prevalency of cuſtom.

I have obſerved, that it is cuſtom which has given riſe to two very dangerous evils within a little time in Italy; the firſt I reckon to be flattery and ceremonies; and the ſecond, intemperance both in eating and drinking.

The firſt of theſe baniſhes out of human converſation, all plain-dealing, frankneſs and ſincerity: and againſt the latter I declare open war, as being the moſt deſtructive of health, and the greateſt enemy it has.

It is an unhappineſs into which the men of this age are fallen, that variety of diſhes is a-la-mode, and become ſo far preferable to frugality. And yet the one is the product of temperance; whilſt pride, and an unreſtrained appetite, is the parent of the other. Notwithſtanding the difference of their origin, yet prodigality is at preſent ſtiled magnificence, generoſity and grandeur, and is commonly eſteemed of in the world; whilſt frugality paſſes for avarice, and ſordidneſs of ſpirit, in the eyes of moſt men. Here is a viſible error, which cuſtom and habit have eſtabliſhed.

This error has ſo far ſeduced us, that it has prevailed upon us to renounce a frugal way of living, tho' taught us by nature, even from the firſt age of the world, as being

ing

ing that which would prolong our days; and has caſt us into thoſe exceſſes, which ſerve only to abridge the number of them. We become old, before we have been able to taſte the pleaſure of being young; and the time which ought to be the ſummer of our lives, is often the beginning of their winter. We ſoon perceive our ſtrength to fail, and weakneſs to come on apace, and decline, even before we come to perfection. On the contrary, ſobriety maintains us in the natural ſtate wherein we ought to be: our youth is laſting, and our manhood attended with a vigour that does not begin to decay, till after a great many years. A whole century muſt be run out, before wrinkles can be formed on the face, or gray hairs grow on the head. This is ſo true, that when men were not addicted to voluptuouſneſs, they had more ſtrength and vivacity at fourſcore, than we have at preſent at forty.

O unhappy Italy! doſt thou not perceive that gluttony and exceſs robs thee every year of more inhabitants, than peſtilence, war and famine could have deſtroyed? Thy true plagues are the frequent feaſtings, which are ſo extravagant, that no tables can be made large enough to hold that number of diſhes which prodigality lays upon them, but they are forced to be heaped upon one another in pyramids. What

madneſs, what fury is this? regulate this diſorder, if not for God's ſake, yet for thy own. I am ſure there is no ſin that diſpleaſes him more, nor any voluptuouſneſs that can be more pernicious to thyſelf. Endeavour then to heal thyſelf of this, as being one of thoſe epidemical diſtempers, from which thou mayeſt be preſerved by wholeſome food, and by the precautions that may prevent them. It is very eaſy to avoid the evils which an exceſs in eating or drinking may bring upon us; nor is it any hard matter to find out a ſovereign remedy againſt repletion, ſince nature itſelf has taught us it. Let us only give it what it requires, and not over-charge it; for a ſmall matter ſuffices nature. The rules of temperance are derived from thoſe of right reaſon. Let us accuſtom ourſelves to eat only to ſupport life; what is more than neceſſary for our nouriſhment, ſows the ſeeds of ſickneſs and death; it is a pleaſure for which we muſt pay very dear, and which can neither be innocent, nor excuſable, ſince it may be ſo prejudicial to us.

How many have I ſeen cut off, in the flower of their days, by the unhappy cuſtom of high-feeding? how many excellent friends has gluttony deprived me of, who might have been ſtill an ornament to the world, an honour to their country, and have occaſioned me as much ſatiſfaction in

enjoying

enjoying them, as now I have ſorrow in loſing them?

It is to put a ſtop to this ſpreading contagion, that I have undertaken to ſhew in this ſmall tract, that the number and variety of diſhes is a fatal abuſe, which ought to be corrected, by living ſoberly, as did the patriarchs of old. Several young perſons, who, for their good qualities, merit my eſteem, having loſt their fathers ſooner than they could have expected, have expreſſed a great deſire of being acquainted with my manner of living. I could not but think their curioſity very reaſonable, ſince nothing is more reaſonable than to wiſh for long life. The more we advance in years, the larger will our experience be; and if nature, which aims only at our good, adviſes us to grow old, and concurs with us in that deſign, it is becauſe ſhe is ſenſible that the body being weakned by time, which deſtroys all things, the mind, when diſengaged from the ſnares of voluptuouſneſs, is more at leiſure to make uſe of its reaſon, and to taſte the ſweets of virtue. Hereupon I was willing to ſatisfy thoſe perſons, and at the ſame time to do ſome ſervice to the public, by declaring what were the motives that induced me to renounce intemperance, and live a ſober life; by ſhewing the method I obſerve, and what benefit I find thereby; and laſtly, by de-

monſtrating, that nothing can be more beneficial to a man, than to obſerve a regimen, that is practicable, and very neceſſary to be followed.

I ſay then, that the weakneſs of my conſtitution, which was conſiderably increaſed by my way of living, caſt me into ſo deplorable a condition, that I was forced to bid a final adieu to all feaſtings, to which I had all my life-long a violent inclination. I was ſo often engaged in exceſſes of this kind, that my tender conſtitution could not hold up under the fatigues of them. I fell into ſeveral diſtempers, ſuch as pains of the ſtomach, the cholick, and the gout. I had a lingering fever, and an intolerable thirſt continually hanging upon me. This made me deſpair of any cure, and though I was then not above 35 or 40 years old, yet I had no hopes of finding any other end of my diſtempers, but what ſhould end my life too.

The beſt phyſicians in Italy made uſe of all their ſkill for my recovery, but without ſucceſs. At laſt, when they quite deſpaired of me, they told me they knew only of one remedy that could cure me, if I had reſolution enough to undertake and continue it; to wit, a ſober and regular life, which they exhorted me to live the remainder of my days, aſſuring, me, that if intemperance had brought ſo many diſtem-

pers,

pers, it was only temperance that could free me from them.

I reliſhed this propoſal; and perceived, that notwithſtanding the miſerable condition to which my intemperance had reduced me, yet I was not ſo incurable, but the contrary might recover, or at leaſt eaſe me. And I was the more eaſily perſuaded to it, becauſe I knew ſeveral perſons of a great age, and a bad conſtitution, who only prolonged their lives by obſerving a regimen; whilſt, on the other hand, I knew others who were born with a wonderful conſtitution, and yet broke it by their debaucheries. It ſeemed very natural to me, that a different way of living and acting produces different effects; ſince art may conduce to correct, perfect, weaken or deſtroy nature, according to the good or bad uſe that is made of it.

The phyſicians beginning to find me tractable, added to what they had before told me, that I muſt either chuſe a regimen, or death; that I could not live, if I did not follow their advice; and that if I deferred much longer taking my reſolutions accordingly, it would be too late to do it. This was home: I was loth to die ſo ſoon, and I could not tell how to bear the thoughts of it; beſides, I was convinced of their experience and ability. In ſhort, being morally certain that my beſt way was

to

to believe them, I reſolved upon putting into practice this courſe of life, how auſtere ſoever it ſeemed to me.

I intreated my phyſicians to inform me exactly, after what manner I ought to govern myſelf? To this they replied, that I muſt always manage myſelf as a ſick perſon; eat nothing but what was good, and that in a ſmall quantity.

They had a long time before preſcribed the ſame thing to me; but, till then, I made a jeſt of it. When I was cloyed with the diet they ordered me, I did eat of all thoſe meats which they had forbidden; and perceiving myſelf hot and dry, I drank wine in abundance. However, I do not boaſt of this my conduct: I was one of thoſe imprudent patients, who not being able to reſolve upon doing whatever is preſcribed them for their health, mind nothing elſe but deceiving their phyſicians, though they prove the greateſt cheats to themſelves at laſt.

As ſoon as I reſolved to believe my phyſicians, and thought that it was a diſgrace not to have courage enough to be wiſe; I accuſtomed myſelf ſo much to live ſoberly, that I contracted a habit of ſo doing, without any trouble or violence offered to myſelf. In a little time I found relief; and (which may ſeem to ſome incredible), at the year's end, I found myſelf not only on the

the mending hand, but I was perfectly cured of all my diſtempers.

When I ſaw I was recovered, and began to taſte the ſweets of this ſort of reſurrection, I made abundance of reflections upon the uſefulneſs of a regular life; I admired the efficacy of it; and perceived, that if it had been ſo powerful as to cure me, it would be capable enough of preſerving me from thoſe diſtempers to which I had been always ſubject.

The experience I had thereof removing all farther ſcruple, I began to ſtudy what food was proper for me. I was minded to try, whether what pleaſed my taſte, were beneficial, or prejudicial to my health; and whether the proverb were true, which ſays, " that what delights the palate, cannot but be good for the heart?" I found it to be falſe; and that it only ſerves as an excuſe to the ſenſualiſts, who are for indulging themſelves in whatever might pleaſe their appetites.

Formerly I could not drink my wine with ice; I loved heady wines, melons, all ſorts of raw fruits, ſalads, ſalt meats, high ſauces, and baked meats, notwithſtanding they were prejudicial to me. Hereupon I made no account of the proverb; and being convinced of its falſity, I made choice of ſuch wines and meats as agreed with my conſtitution: I proportioned the quantity

thereof

thereof according to the ſtrength of my ſtomach. I declined all diet that did not agree with me; and made it a law to myſelf, to lay a reſtraint upon my appetite; ſo that I always roſe from table, with a ſtomach to eat more if I pleaſed. In a word, I entirely renounced intemperance, and made a vow to continue the remainder of my life under the ſame regimen that I had obſerved: a happy reſolution this, the keeping whereof has freed me from all my infirmities, which without it were incurable! I never before lived a year together, without falling once at leaſt into ſome violent diſtemper; but this never happened to me afterwards: on the contrary, I have been always healthful, ever ſince I have been temperate.

The nouriſhment which I take, being in quality and quantity juſt enough to ſuffice nature, breeds no ſuch corrupt humours, as ſpoil the beſt conſtitutions. It is true, indeed, that, beſides this precaution, I made uſe of many others. For inſtance, I took care to keep myſelf from heats and colds, I abſtained from all violent exerciſes, as alſo from ill hours and women. I no longer lived in places where it was an unwholeſome air, and took ſpecial care to avoid the being expoſed to violent winds, or to the exceſſive heat of the ſun. All theſe cautions may ſeem morally impoſſible to thoſe men, who

who, in their tranſactions in the world, follow no other guides but their own paſſions; and yet they are not hard to be practiſed, when a man can be ſo juſt to himſelf, as to prefer the preſervation of his health to all the pleaſures of ſenſe, and neceſſary hurry of buſineſs.

I likewiſe found it advantageous to me, not to abandon myſelf to melancholy, by baniſhing out of my mind whatever might occaſion it: I made uſe of all the powers of my reaſon, to reſtrain the force of thoſe paſſions, whoſe violence does often break the conſtitution of the ſtrongeſt bodies. It is true, indeed, that I was not always ſo much a philoſopher, nor yet ſo cautious, but that ſometimes I fell into thoſe diſorders that I would have avoided; but this rarely happened: and the guard I kept over my appetite, which ought chiefly to be minded, prevented all the pernicious conſequences, which might have ariſen from my petty irregularities.

This is certain, that the paſſions have leſs influence, and cauſe leſs diſorder, in a body that is regular in its diet, than in another which gives the looſe to the cravings of an inordinate appetite. Galen made this obſervation before me; and I might produce ſeveral authorities to ſupport this opinion, but I will go only upon mine own experience. It was impoſſible for me ſometimes

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to abſtain from the extremes of hot and cold, and to get an entire maſtery over all the occaſions of trouble which had croſſed my whole life; but yet theſe emotions made no alteration in the ſtate of my health: and I met with a great many inſtances of perſons, who ſunk under a leſs weight, both of body and mind.

There was in our family a conſiderable ſuit of law depending againſt ſome perſons, whoſe might overcame our right. One of my brothers, and ſome of my relations, who having never ſmarted for their debauches, were the more free to indulge them, could not conquer that concern which the loſe of this ſuit of law wrought in them, and perfectly died of grief. I was as ſenſible as they were of the injuſtice that was done us, but I did not die for it; and I attribute their loſs, and my welfare, to the difference in our way of living. I was made amends for that diſgrace, by the comfort I had of not ſinking under it; and now make no manner of doubt, but that the paſſions are leſs violent in a man that lives ſoberly, than in one that does not.

At ſeventy years of age, I had another experiment of the uſefulneſs of my regimen. A buſineſs of an extraordinary conſequence drawing me into the country, my coach-horſes went faſter than I would have them; being laſhed with the whip, they got a-head:

head, and ran away with me. I was overthrown, and dragged a long way before they could ſtay the horſes. They took me out of the coach, with my head broken, a leg and an arm out of joint, and, in a word, in a very lamentable condition. As ſoon as they had brought me home again, they ſent for the phyſicians, who did not expect I could live three days to an end: however, they reſolved upon letting of me blood, to prevent the coming of a fever, which uſually happens in ſuch caſes. I was ſo confident, that the regular life which I had led, had prevented the contracting of any ill humours which I might be afraid of, that I oppoſed their preſcription. I ordered them to dreſs my head, to ſet my leg and my arm, to rub me with ſome ſpecific oils proper for bruiſes; and, without any other remedies, I was ſoon cured to the great aſtoniſhment of the phyſicians, and of all thoſe who knew me. From hence I infer, that a regular life is an excellent preſervative againſt all natural evils, and that intemperance produces quite contrary effects.

About five years ago, I was over-perſuaded to do a thing which had like to have coſt me dear. My relations, whom I love, and who have a real tenderneſs for me; my friends, with whom I was willing to comply in any thing that was reaſonable; laſtly, my phyſicians, who were looked

upon as the oracles of health, did all agree, that I eat too little; that the nouriſhment I took was not ſufficient for one of my years; that I ought not only to ſupport nature, but likewiſe to increaſe the vigour of it, by eating a little more than I did. It was in vain for me to repreſent to them, that nature is content with a little; that this little having preſerved me ſo long in health, cuſtom was become a ſecond nature to me: that it was more reaſonable, ſince natural heat abates in proportion as one grows older, that I ſhould likewiſe abridge my allowance in diet.

To add the greater force to my opinion, I mentioned to them the proverb which ſaith, "He that eats little, eats much;" that is, if a man is willing to live long in the enjoyment of his food, let him live ſparingly. I likewiſe told them, that what one leaves at a meal does more good than what one has already eaten. But all this could not prevail upon them; and, being wearied with their importunities, I was forced to ſubmit. Having therefore before been uſed to take twelve ounces, in bread, ſoups, yolks of eggs, and meat, I increaſed it to fourteen ounces a-day; and drinking about fourteen ounces of wine, I added two ounces more, and made it ſixteen.

This augmentation of diet was ſo prejudicial to me, that, as briſk as I was, I began

to be ſad, and out of humour; every thing offended me, and, upon the leaſt occaſion, I broke out into a paſſion, ſo that a dog (as they ſay) would not live with me. At twelve days end, I was taken with a violent fit of the cholic, and that followed by a continual fever, which tormented me five and thirty days together, and, for the firſt fifteen days, put me into ſuch an agony, that it was impoſſible for me to take a quarter of an hour's ſleep at a time. There was no occaſion to aſk my friend whether they deſpaired of my life, and whether they repented of the advice they had given me; for they ſeveral times believed that I was a dying man, juſt giving up the ghoſt. However, I recovered, tho' I was ſeventy eight years of age, and tho' we had a harder winter than is uſual in our climate.

Nothing freed me from this danger but the regimen which I had ſo long obſerved. It had prevented me from contracting thoſe ill humours, with which they are troubled in their old age, who are not ſo wiſe as to take care of themſelves whilſt they are young. I did not perceive in me the old leaven of thoſe humours, and, having nothing to ſtruggle with but the new ones, which were occaſioned by this ſmall addition to my diet, I oppoſed and conquered my indiſpoſition, notwithſtanding its force.

From this ſickneſs, and my recovery

from it, we may diſcern what an influence a regimen has over us, which preſerved me from death; and what a power repletion has, which in ſo few days brought me to the laſt extremity. It is probable, that order being neceſſary for the conſervation of the univerſe, and our bodily life being nothing elſe but a harmony and perfect agreement between the elementary qualities of which our bodies are compoſed, we cannot live long in a diſorderly courſe of life, of which nothing but corruption can poſſibly come.

Order, indeed, is ſo exceeding beneficial, that it cannot be too ſtrictly obſerved in every thing. It is by the means of this that we arrive to the perfection of arts, and an eaſy accompliſhment in the ſciences. It renders armies victorious, keeps up the civil polity of cities, and concord in families; it renders whole nations flouriſhing; in a word, it is the ſupport and preſerver both of the civil and natural life, and the beſt remedy that can be applied to all evils, whether public or private.

When a diſintereſted phyſician waits upon a patient, let him remember to recommend to him his diet, and eſpecially a regimen therein, in order to his recovery. This is certain, that if all men would live regularly and frugally, there would be ſo few ſick perſons, that there would hardly be

be any occaſion for remedies; every one would become his own phyſician, and would be convinced that he never met with a better. It would be to little purpoſe to ſtudy the conſtitution of other men; every one, if he would but apply himſelf to it, would always be better acquainted with his own, than with that of another; every one would be capable of making thoſe experiments for himſelf, which another could not do for him, and would be the beſt judge of the ſtrength of his own ſtomach, and of the food which is agreeable thereto; for, in one word, it is next to impoſſible to know exactly the conſtitution of another, the conſtitutions of men being as different from one another as their complexions. Who now, for inſtance, would imagine, that old wine ſhould be hurtful, and new wine wholeſome to me? that things which are looked upon to be naught by nature, ſhould refreſh and ſtrengthen me? what phyſician could have obſerved in me thoſe effects, ſo uncommon in moſt bodies, and ſo contrary to the notions of mankind, when I myſelf was at no ſmall pains in diſcovering the cauſes thereof, after abundance of trials which prove the difference of mens conſtitutions?

Since no man, therefore, can have a better phyſician than himſelf, nor a more ſovereign antidote than a regimen, every one ought

to follow my example; that is, to ſtudy his own conſtitution, and to regulate his life according to the rules of right reaſon.

I own, indeed, that a phyſician may be ſometimes neceſſary; ſince there are ſome diſtempers which all human prudence cannot provide againſt. There happen ſome unavoidable accidents, which ſeize us after ſuch a manner, as to deprive our judgment of the liberty it ought to have to be a comfort to us. It is fooliſhneſs then wholly to rely upon nature, it muſt have a ſupply, and recourſe muſt be had to ſome one or other for it.

If the preſence of a friend who comes "to viſit a ſick perſon," and to teſtify the concern he has for his illneſs, be a comfort and refreſhment to him, there is greater reaſon to believe, that the viſit of a phyſician muſt needs be more agreeable, being a friend upon whoſe advice and care we may depend for a ſpeedy recovery of our health; but, for the maintaining of that health, there needs no other ſupport, but a ſober and regular life. It is a ſpecific and natural medicine which preſerves the man, how tender ſoever his conſtitution be, and prolongs his life to above a hundred years, ſpares him the pain of a violent death, ſends him quietly out of the world, when the radical moiſture is quite ſpent, and which, in ſhort, has all the properties that are fancied

fancied to be in *Aurum Potabile*, and the *Elixir* which a great many perſons have ſought after in vain.

But, alas! moſt men ſuffer themſelves to be ſeduced by the charms of a voluptuous life. They have not courage enough to deny their appetites; and, being over-perſuaded by their prejudices ſo far, as to think they cannot prevent the gratification of them, without abridging too much of their pleaſures, they form ſyſtems, whereby to perſuade themſelves, that it is more eligible to live ten years leſs, than to be upon the reſtraint, and deprived of whatever may gratify the cravings of their appetites.

Alas! they know not the value of ten years healthful life in an age, when a man may enjoy the full uſe of his reaſon, and make an advantage of all his experiences: in an age wherein a man may appear to be truly ſuch by his wiſdom and conduct: laſtly, in a time wherein he is in a condition of reaping the fruits of his ſtudies and labours.

To inſtance only in the ſciences, it is certain, that the beſt books which we have extant, were compoſed in thoſe laſt ten years which the intemperate deſpiſe; and that men's minds growing to perfection, proportionably as their bodies grow old, arts and ſciences would have loſt a great deal of their perfection, if all the great men who

who were profeſſors of that, had lived ten years ſhorter than they did. For my part, I think it proper to keep the fatal day of my death as far off as I can. If this had not been my reſolution, I ſhould not have finiſhed ſeveral pieces, which will be both pleaſing and inſtructing to thoſe who come after me.

The ſenſualiſts farther object, that it is impoſſible to live a regular life. To this I reply, that Galen, who was ſo great a man, made choice of it, and adviſed others to do the ſame, as being the beſt courſe they could take. Plato, Cicero, Iſocrates, and a great many famous men of paſt ages embraced it; and, in our time, pope Paul Farneze, cardinal Bembo, and two of our Doges, Lando, and Dorato, have practiſed it, and thereby arrived to an extreme old age. I might inſtance in others of a meaner extract; but, having followed this rule myſelf, I think I cannot produce a more convincing proof of its being practicable, and that the greateſt trouble to be met with therein, is the firſt reſolving and entring upon ſuch a courſe of life.

You will tell me that Plato, as ſober a man as he was, yet affirmed, that a man devoted to the adminiſtration of the government in public affairs, can hardly lead an exact and regular life, being often obliged in the ſervice of the ſtate, to be expoſed

to the badneſs of weather, to the fatigues of travelling, and to eat whatever he can meet with. This cannot be denied; but then I maintain, that theſe things will never haſten a man's death, provided he that is in this poſt accuſtoms himſelf to a frugal way of living. There is no man, in what condition ſoever he is, but may prevent his over-eating, and cure himſelf of thoſe diſtempers that are cauſed by repletion. They who have the charge of public affairs committed to their truſt, are more obliged to it than any others: where there is no glory to be got for their country, they ought not to ſacrifice themſelves: they ſhould preſerve themſelves to ſerve it; and if they purſue my method, it is certain they would ward off the diſtempers which heat, and cold, and fatigues might bring upon them; or ſhould they be diſturbed with them, it would be but very lightly.

It may likewiſe be objected, that if one who is well is dieted like one that is ſick, he will be at a loſs about the choice of his diet, when any diſtemper comes upon him. To this I ſay, that nature, which preſerves all beings as far as poſſible, teaches us how we ought to govern ourſelves in ſuch a caſe. It begins by depriving us altogether of our appetites, that we can eat little or nothing at all. At that time, whether the ſick perſon has been ſober or intemperate, no

other

other food ought to be made uſe of, but ſuch as is proper for the condition wherein he is; ſuch as broth, jellies, cordials, barley-water, *&c*: When his recovery will permit him to make uſe of a more ſolid nouriſhment, he muſt take leſs than he was uſed to before his ſickneſs, and, notwithſtanding the eagerneſs of his appetite, he muſt take care of his ſtomach, till he has a perfect cure. Should he do otherwiſe, he would overburden nature, and infallibly relapſe into the danger from whence he eſcaped. But, notwithſtanding this, I dare aver, that he who leads a ſober and regular life will hardly ever be ſick; or if he is it will be but ſeldom, and for a ſhort time. This way of living preſerves us from thoſe humours which occaſion our infirmities and by conſequence heals us of all thoſe diſtempers which they engender. The defect of the cauſe does phyſically prevent the production of the effect; and the effect cannot be dangerous and violent, when the cauſe itſelf is but ſlight and weak.

Since then ſobriety lays a reſtraint upon our paſſions, preſerves our health, and is both wholeſome and beneficial to us, ought it not to be followed and embraced by all men? Self-love, if well underſtood, adviſes us to it: it is neither impoſſible nor difficult: and the method I take, ought to discourage no-body from undertaking it. For

I do not pretend to perſuade every body to as little as I do, or to debar themſelves from the uſe of a great many things from which I refrain. I eat but little, becauſe my ſtomach is nice, and I abſtain from certain diſhes becauſe they are prejudicial to me. They who are not offended by them, are not obliged to refrain from them, but are allowed the uſe of them; only they ought to abſtain from eating too much, even of that which agrees with them, becauſe it would be prejudicial to them, ſince an overcharged ſtomach cannot ſo eaſily digeſt it. In ſhort, he that is offended at nothing, has no occaſion of enquiring into the quality of his diet, he ought only to be cautious of the quantity thereof.

It ſignifies nothing to tell me, that there are ſeveral who deny themſelves nothing, do yet live as long without infirmities as they who are ſober. This is but rare, uncertain, hazardous, and, in a manner, miraculous. The inſtances of this nature do not at all juſtify the conduct of thoſe perſons, who reckon it an extraordinary happineſs, and are commonly the betrayers of their good conſtitution. It is more certain, that an infirm old man will live longer by obſerving a ſtrict regimen, than a young, vigorous, and healthful man will, that gives the looſe to his appetite.

However,

However, this is certain, that a good conſtitution, with the ſupport of a regular life, will carry a man farther than a weak one, though managed with an equal degree of care. God and nature may form bodies ſo ſtrong and robuſt, as to be proof againſt all that is contrary to us; as I have obſerved at Venice, the procurator, Thomas Mattereni, and at Padua the chevalier Antonio Capo di Vacca; but among a thouſand one ſhall hardly meet with the like. All others who are for a long and healthful life, who would die without an agony, and only by a pure diſſolution, who would, laſtly, enjoy the advantages of a happy old age, will never come to what they aim at, without ſobriety.

It is temperance alone which ſupports our conſtitution, without any alteration; it creates nothing but ſweet and wholeſome humours, which, ſending up no vapours to the brain, leave the mind the perfect uſe of the organs, and are no hinderance from raiſing its contemplation from the wonders of the world, to the conſideration of the power of its Creator. A man can be never the better for thoſe reflections, when his head is full of the vapours of wine and meat; but, when once theſe fumes are gone, his underſtanding is clear, he obſerves and diſcerns a thouſand agreeable things, which he would not have known or comprehended

prehended in another ſtate. He can then diſcern the falſity of thoſe pleaſures which voluptuouſneſs promiſes the real goods with which virtue loads us, and the unhappineſs of thoſe whom a fatal deluſion renders ſlaves to their paſſions.

The three moſt dangerous, are, the pleaſure of the taſte, the hunting after honours, and the poſſeſſion of riches: theſe deſires increaſe with the age of old men; who having always led a diſorderly life, have ſuffered their luſts to take root in their youth and manhood. A wiſe man does not ſtay ſo long before he corrects them; he declares betimes a war againſt his paſſions, of which he does not obtain the maſtery till after after ſeveral ſtruggles; and then virtue in its turn triumphs, and crowns the man with the bleſſings of heaven, and the eſteem of all the world.

Is he ready to pay the tribute that is due to nature? full of acknowledgments for the favours already received from God, he throws himſelf into the arms of his future mercy. He is not afraid of thoſe everlaſting puniſhments which they deſerve, who by their intemperance offer violence to their own lives. He dies without complaining, becauſe he was not to live for ever; and his reaſon ſweetens the bitterneſs of his fatality. In a word, he leaves the world generouſly, when in a long tract of

happy years he has had time enough to enjoy his virtue and reputation; and conſiders, that not one in a thouſand, who have lived otherwiſe than he has done, has arrived at ſuch an age.

He is comforted the more, upon conſidering, that this ſeparation will not be violent, painful, or feveriſh. His end is calm, and he expires like a lamp when the oil is ſpent, no delirium, no convulſions attending him: and ſo he paſſes from this corruptible life, to that whoſe eternal happineſs is the reward of the virtuous

O happy, bleſſed, and regular life! how worthy art thou of our eſteem; and how doſt thou deſerve to be preferred before thy contrary? We need only reflect upon the different effects of both, to be ſenſible of the advantages that attend thee; the thy name alone is ſufficient to attract that eſteem which thou deſerveſt.

Having thus given the reaſons which made me abandon an intemperate, and take up with a ſober life, as alſo the method I obſerved in it, and the benefit which I reaped from it, and the advantage which others may receive from the practice thereof; I ſhall now direct my diſcourſe to thoſe who ſuppoſe it to be no benefit to grow old, becauſe they fancy, that when a man paſt ſeventy, his life is nothing but weakneſs, infirmity and miſery. In the firſt place

place, I can assure them, that they are mightily mistaken; and that I find myself, as old as I am (which is much beyond what they speak of), to be in the most pleasant and delightsome stage of life.

To prove that I have reason for what I say, they need only enquire how I spend my time, what are my usual pleasures and business; and to hear the testimony of all those that know me. They unanimously testify, that the life I lead is not a dead and languishing life, but as happy a one as can be wished for in this world.

They will tell you, that I am still so strong at fourscore and three, as to mount a horse without any help: that I cannot only go down stairs without any concern, but likewise descend a hill all on foot: that I am always merry, always pleased, always in humour; maintaining a happy peace in my own mind, the sweetness and serenity whereof appear at all times in my countenance.

Besides, they know that it is in my power to pass away the time very pleasantly, having nothing to hinder me from tasting all the pleasures of an agreeable society, with several persons of parts and worth. When I am willing to be alone, I read good books, and sometimes fall to writing; seeking always an occasion of being useful to the public, and doing service to private

perſons as far as poſſible. I do all this without the leaſt trouble, and in ſuch times as I ſet apart for theſe employments.

I dwell in a houſe, which, beſides its being ſituated in the pleaſanteſt part of Padua, may be looked upon as the moſt convenient and moſt agreeable manſion in that city. I there make me apartments proper for the winter and ſummer, which ſerves as a ſhelter to defend me from the extreme heat of the one, and the rigid coldneſs of the other. I walk out in my gardens, along my canals and walks, where I always meet with ſome little thing or other to do, which, at the ſame time, employs and diverts me.

I ſpend the months of April, May, September, and October, at my country-houſe, which is the fineſt ſituation imaginable; the air of it is good, the avenues neat, the gardens magnificent, the waters clear and plentiful; and this ſeat may well paſs for an inchanted palace. When I am there, I ſometimes divert myſelf with a ſport that agrees moſt with my age; *viz.* in going out with a ſetting-dog, or with terriers.

Sometimes I take a walk to my villa, all whoſe ſtreets terminate at a large ſquare, in the midſt of which is a pretty neat church, and large enough for the bigneſs of the pariſh.

Through

Through this villa runs a rivulet; and the country about is enriched with fruitful and well cultivated fields, having at preſent a conſiderable number of inhabitants. This was not ſo anciently: it was a marſhy place, and the air ſo bad, that it was more proper for frogs and toads, than for men to dwell in. I thought it adviſable to drain the marſh-lands, ſo that being dry the air became more wholeſome. Several families have ſettled there, and rendered the place very populous; where, I may ſay, that I have dedicated to the Lord a church, altars, and hearts to worſhip him: which reflection is a great comfort to me as often as I make it.

Sometimes I pay a viſit to my friends of the neighbouring towns, who procure me an acquaintance with the ingenious men of the place. I diſcourſe with them about architecture, painting, ſculpture, mathematics, and agriculture; ſciences for which I had all my life-long a great fondneſs, and the rather, becauſe they were very much in eſteem in my time.

I ſaw with curioſity the new pieces of workmanſhip; and it was a new pleaſure to me, to take a ſecond view of thoſe which I had already ſeen; and I am always learning ſomething that I am pleaſed to know.

I viſit public buildings, palaces, gardens, antiquities, ſquares, churches, and fortifi-

cations; paſſing by no place that may gratify my curioſity, or give me any new light into things.

That which charmed me moſt in the little journeys I took, was the various proſpects of places through which I went: the plains, the hills, the rivulets, the caſtles, and the villages, were as ſo many objects that offered themſelves with pleaſure to my ſight, and afforded a delightful view.

In ſhort, the pleaſures I take are not imperfect upon the account of the weakneſs of my organs: I ſee and hear as well as ever I did in my life: all my ſenſes are as free, and as perfect as ever; eſpecially my taſte, which is better with that little which I eat at preſent, than when I was a ſlave to my appetite.

Changing of beds is no hinderance to my repoſe: I ſleep very ſoundly, and if I dream, my dreams are pleaſant.

It is with a great deal of ſatisfaction that I ſee the end of a work of ſuch importance to this ſtate, which has rendered ſo many places fertile, that before were uncultivated and uſeleſs; a thing I never expected to have ſeen completed, conſidering how many ſtates are loth to begin, and weary of carrying on, undertakings of ſo vaſt a charge, and ſo difficult to be performed. I was upon the places for two months together, with the commiſſaries that had

the overſight of theſe works; and this during the greateſt heat of the ſummer; and yet, thanks to my regimen, the only preſerver of my health, neither the unwholeſome air of the fens, nor the fatigue, did me any injury.

Such as theſe are the employments and diverſions of my old age; which is, bleſſed be God, free from thoſe diſturbances of mind, and infirmities of body, under which ſo many poor rheumatic and crazy old men, as well as miſerable young men labour.

If in diſcourſing on ſuch a ſerious ſubject as this, it be allowable to ſpeak of trifles, I might tell you that at the age of fourſcore and three, a ſober life had preſerved me in that ſprightlineſs of thought, and gaiety of humour, as to be able to compoſe a play for the uſe of the ſtage, which was diverting, without ſhocking the audience. Comedy is uſually the product of youth, as tragedy is of old age. The latter, by the gravity of its compoſure, ſuiting to riper years; whilſt the former, by its facetiouſneſs, is more agreeable to thoſe that are young. If antiquity has ſo far commended and admired a Greek poet, for having, in the ſeventy-third year of his age, compoſed a tragedy, which is a grave and ſerious poem, why ſhould I be leſs admired, and happy in having compoſed a comedy, which

which is diverting at my age? for this I am ſure of, that though that author was ten years younger than I am, yet he had not more health, nor a briſker genius.

To conclude, as an addition to my happineſs, I ſee myſelf as it were immortalized, and born again by the great number of my deſcendants. I meet with not only two or three when I come home, but eleven grand-children, the eldeſt of which is eighteen, and the youngeſt two years old, all born of the ſame father and the ſame mother; all healthful, of good parts, and of promiſing hopes. I take a delight in playing with the youngſters; children between three and five years of age being generally very merry and diverting company. Thoſe who are older, entertain me better; I often make them ſing and play upon muſical inſtruments, and ſometimes I join in concert with them.

Call you this an infirm and crazy old age, as they pretend who ſay, that a man is but half alive after he is ſeventy? they may believe me if they pleaſe, but, in reality, I would not change my age and life, for the moſt flouriſhing youth, which lays no reſtraint upon its ſenſes, being ſure that it is ſubject to a great many diſtempers, which may occaſion death.

I remember all the follies that I was guilty of in my young days, and am perfectly

fectly ſenſible of the danger, and imprudence of them. I know with what violence young perſons are carried away by their paſſions, and how much they preſume upon their ſtrength, but would think they had taken a ſure leaſe of their life; they expoſe it raſhly, as if it were chargeable to them, and they run head-long into whatſoever their concupiſcence prompts them to. They muſt gratify their appetites whatever it coſt them, without perceiving that they feed thoſe ill humours which will render their lives miſerable, and haſten the hour of their death.

Of theſe two, the one is cruel, the other dreadful and inſupportable, by all ſenſual men, eſpecially young people, who ſuppoſe they have a better title to life than others; and libertines, who are not ſo blind as to flatter themſelves, that God will permit their ſin to go unpuniſhed.

As for my part, bleſſed be God, I find myſelf freed from thoſe juſt fears which cannot but alarm them, whenever they are capable of reflection. For, in the firſt place, I am certain that I ſhall not fall ſick, ſince I take care, by a regular diet, to ward off infirmities; and then, ſecondly, the time of my death approaching, teaches me to ſubmit quietly to that which is inevitable, and from which no man could ever ſecure himſelf. It is folly to be afraid

of

of that which cannot be avoided; but I hope, when ever the time comes, the merits of Jeſus Chriſt will be available to me; though I am ſenſible that I muſt die, yet I am perſuaded it will be a long time e're I ſhall, ſince this diſſolution cannot happen but by the conſumption of the radical moiſture which is exhauſted by age.

The regular life which I lead has left death this only way of deſtroying me. The humours of my body can do me more injury, than the elementary qualities which prevailed in my nature ever ſince my birth. I am not ſo ſtupid as not to perceive, that having had a beginning, I muſt of neceſſity have an end; bnt ſince we muſt die, doubtleſs that death is attended with leſs terror which happens by the natural diſſolution of the parts of which we are compoſed. Nature herſelf having tied the bands of our life, can likewiſe untie them again without the leaſt pain, and can ſtay longer before it executes that office, than ſickneſſes generally do, which with violence break the bands of our life aſunder, and which cannot happen to us but by foreign cauſes; ſince nothing is more contrary to nature than that which tends to our deſtruction.

When a man draws near his end, he perceives his ſtrength to abate by degrees; the organs, and all the faculties grow weak; he can no longer walk, and can hardly ſpeak

ſpeak: his judgment and memory fail him: he becomes blind, deaf, and bowed together; in fine, his whole frame is worn out. Bleſſed be God, I am not as yet in that condition. On the contrary, I promiſe myſelf, that my ſoul finds itſelf ſo well in my body, where ſhe meets with nothing but peace, unity and concord (ſpite of all the different qualities of the humours which compoſe us, and the various inclinations that are produced by the ſenſes), that ſhe will be under no temptation to wiſh a ſpeedy ſeparation, and that it will be a long time before ſhe can be brought to a reſolution.

To conclude, I am aſſured that I ſhall ſtill live ſeveral years in health, and that I ſhall long enjoy the pleaſure of being in the world, which is certainly very comfortable, when a man knows how to make a right uſe of it. I hope to reap a greater ſatisfaction from hence in the other life, and I ſhall lie under obligations to the virtues of the regimen, to which I am indebted for the victory I have obtained over my paſſions. Nor is there any man but may hope for the ſame happineſs, if he would live as I have done.

A ſober life therefore being ſo neceſſary, its name ſo commendable, the enjoyment of it ſo beneficial, nothing remains, after what has been ſaid, but to conjure all men, as they love themſelves, to make the beſt

of

of life, and to lay in a ſtock of that which being the moſt precious of all, deſerves to be ſought after, if we have it not, and to be preſerved if we have it.

It is this divine ſobriety which is always pleaſing to God, and always the friend of nature; ſhe is the daughter of reaſon, the ſiſter of all other virtues, the companion of temperance; always chearful, always modeſt, always wiſe and regular in her operations. She is the root of health, of induſtry, and of whatever becomes a great ſoul to be employed about. She has the laws of God and nature, both to juſtify and enforce her. When ſhe reigns, repletion, diſorders, evil habits, ſuperfluous humours, fevers, aches, and the fears of death, do not diſreliſh or embitter our pleaſures.

The happineſs of it ſhould invite us, the comelineſs of it ſhould allure us to embrace it. She offers to us the duration of our mortal being: She is the faithful guardian of the life of man, whether he be rich or poor, young or old, of what ſex ſoever. She teaches the rich not to abuſe his wealth, the poor to bear patiently the inconveniencies of his ſtate: ſhe teaches the man wiſdom, the woman chaſtity; old men the ſecret of putting off their death, and young men the means of enjoying a long life. She files the ruſt off our ſenſes, renders the body vigorous, the mind clear,

the ſoul lovely; gives us a happy memory, free motions, and juſt actions. It is by it that the mind, being diſengaged from matter, enjoys a larger freedom, and the blood runs ſmoothly in our veins, without meeting with any obſtruction in its circulation. It is laſtly by it, that all the powers, both of ſoul and body, are kept up in a perfect union, which nothing but the contrary vice can diſturb.

O ſacred and healthful ſobriety! the powerful ſupport of our nature, the true phyſic of body and mind. How ought men to praiſe thee, and acknowledge thy benefits, ſince thou furniſheſt them with the means of attaining heaven, and of preſerving life and health here upon earth?

But not deſigning to enlarge any farther in commendation of this virtue, I ſhall conclude, keeping within the bounds of ſobriety on this ſubject; not becauſe I have ſaid enough of it, but that I may ſay more of it another time.

CHAP. II.

The Method of correcting a bad Conſtitution.

SEVERAL perſons, whoſe weak conſtitutions required great care in the management of it, having been well ſatisfied with what I have written concerning ſobriety, the experience which they have had of the uſefulneſs of my counſels, and the acknowledgments which they have made thereof, encourage me to take up my pen again, that I may convince thoſe who meet with no inconvenience from intemperance, that they are in the wrong in relying ſo much on the ſtrength of their conſtitution.

Let it be ever ſo well compoſed, yet it holds not good but to ſuch an age. Theſe perſons ſeldom arrive to ſixty, but they decay all of a ſudden, and perceive themſelves loaded with a complication of diſtempers. Some are gouty, dropſical, and rheumatical: others are ſubject to cholics, the ſtone and piles; laſtly, to abundance of diſtempers, which would never have happened to them, if they had been ſo wiſe as to have taken care of themſelves in their youth. If they die infirm at fourſcore years of age, they might have lived in health to an hundred

dred, and ſo have run out the term of life which nature has left open to all men.

It is to be ſuppoſed that this common parent wiſhes that all her children might live at leaſt a century; and ſince ſome among them have lived to a longer date, why ſhould not others have a right of expecting the ſame advantage?

I do not diſagree, but that we are ſubject to the ſtars which were predominant at our birth. Their good or bad aſpects enfeeble or ſtrengthen the ſprings of our life; but man being endued with judgment and reaſon, ought to repair, by his prudent conduct, the harm which his planet may have done him; he may prolong his days by the means of a ſober life, to as long a period as if he had been born very ſtrong and luſty. Prudence prevents and corrects the malignity of the planets; they give us certain inclinations, they carry us out to certain paſſions; but they lay no violence upon us; we may reſiſt them, and in this ſenſe a wiſe man is above the ſtars.

I was born very choleric and haſty; I flew out into a paſſion for the leaſt trifle; I huffed all mankind, and was ſo intolerable, that a great many perſons of repute avoided my company. I apprehended the injury which I did myſelf; I knew that anger is a real frenzy: that it diſturbs our judgment, that it tranſports us beyond our-

ſelves, and that the difference between a paſſionate and a mad man, is only this, that the latter has loſt his reaſon for ever, and the former only deprived of it by fits. A ſober life cured me of this frenzy; by its aſſiſtance I became ſo moderate, and ſo much a maſter of my paſſion, that no-body could perceive that it was born with me.

A man may likewiſe with reaſon, and a regular life, correct a bad conſtitution; and notwithſtanding the tenderneſs thereof, may live a long time in good health. I ſhould never have ſeen forty years had I followed all my inclinations; and yet I am in the eighty-ſixth year of my age. If the long and dangerous diſtempers which I had in my youth, had not conſumed a great deal of the radical moiſture, the loſs of which is irreparable, I might have promiſed myſelf to have lived a complete century. But, without flattering myſelf, I find it to be a great matter to have arrived to forty-ſix years more than I ever expected, and that in my old age my conſtitution is ſtill ſo good, that not only my teeth, my voice, my memory, and my heart, are in as good a condition as ever they were in the briſkeſt days of my youth, but likewiſe my judgment has loſt nothing of its clearneſs and force.

I am of the opinion, that this proceeds from the abridgment I make of my food, proportionably

proportionably to my growing into years. Experience, which tells us that infants have a greater appetite, and are more often hungry than grown men, ought likewise to teach us, that in old age we have less need of nourishment than in the beginning of our life. A man who is very old can hardly eat, because he can scarce digest what he eats; a little serves his turn, and the yolk of an egg is a good meal to him. I shall be satisfied therewith to the end of my days, hoping, by this conduct, neither to die with violence nor with pain, not questioning, but that they who would imitate me will meet with as easy an exit, since we are all of the same species, and made up of the same materials.

Since nothing then is more advantageous for a man upon earth than to live long, he is obliged to preserve his health as far as possible; and this he cannot do without sobriety. It is true, indeed, that there are several who eat and drink plentifully, and yet live to an hundred years of age. It is by their example that others flatter themselves with the hopes of attaining to the same age, without any occasion of laying a restraint upon themselves. But they are in the wrong upon these two accounts. First, because there is hardly one in a thousand that has so strong a constitution. Secondly, because such men do generally end their

lives by ſuch diſtempers, as put them into great agonies by dying, which would never happen to thoſe that have the ſame government of themſelves that I have. A man runs the riſque of not attaining to fifty years of age, for not daring to undertake a regular courſe of life; which is no impoſſible thing, ſince it is what I and ſeverall others have practiſed, and do practiſe. And a man becomes inſenſibly a murderer of himſelf; becauſe he cannot be perſuaded, that, notwithſtanding the falſe charms of a voluptuous life, a wiſe man ought not to look upon it as any hardſhip to put in practice what his reaſon adviſes him.

Reaſon, if we hearken to it, will tell us, that a good regimen is neceſſary for the prolonging of our days; and that it conſiſts in two things: firſt, in taking care of the quality, and, ſecondly, of the quantity; ſo as to eat and drink nothing that offends the ſtomach, nor any more than what we can eaſily digeſt. Our experience ought to be our guide in theſe two principles, when we are arrived to forty, fifty, or threeſcore years of age. He who puts in practice that knowledge which he has of what is good for him, and goes on in a frugal way of living, keeps the humours in a juſt temperature, and prevents them from being altered; though he ſuffer heat and cold, tho' he be fatigued, though his ſleep be

be broke, provided there be no exceſs in any of them. This being ſo, what an obligation does a man lie under of living ſoberly? and ought he not to free himſelf from the fears of ſinking under the leaſt intemperature of the air, and under the leaſt fatigue, which make us ſick upon every ſlight occaſion?

It is true, indeed, the moſt ſober may ſometimes be indiſpoſed, when they are unavoidably obliged to tranſgreſs the rules which they have been uſed to obſerve: but then they are certain, that their indiſpoſition will not laſt above two or three days at moſt; nor can they fall into a fever. Wearineſs and faintneſs are eaſily remedied by reſt and good diet. The malignancy of the ſtars cannot put the malignant humours in a ferment in bodies which have them not: tho' deſtempers which proceed from intemperance, have an internal cauſe, and may be dangerous, thoſe which are derived from the influence of the planets, affect us only externally, and cannot produce any great diſorders.

There are ſome who feed high, and maintain, whatſoever they eat is ſo little a diſturbance to them, that they cannot perceive in what part of their body their ſtomach lies: But I aver, that they do not ſpeak as they think; nor is it natural. It is impoſſible, that any created being ſhould be

be of ſo perfect a compoſition, as that neither heat or cold, dry or moiſt, ſhould have any influence over it; and that the variety of food which they make uſe of, of different qualities, ſhould be equally agreeable to them. Thoſe men cannot but acknowledge, that they are ſometimes out of order: if it is not owing to a ſenſible indigeſtion, yet they are troubled with head-achs, want of ſleep and fevers, of which they are cured by a diet, and taking ſuch medicines as are proper for evacuation. It is therefore certain, that their diſtempers proceed from repletion, or from their having eat or drank ſomething which did not agree with their ſtomachs.

Moſt old people excuſe their high feeding, by ſaying, that it is neceſſary for them to eat a great deal, to keep up their natural heat, which diminiſhes proportionably as they grow in years; and, to create an appetite, it is requiſite to find out proper ſauces, and to eat whatever they have a fancy for; and that without thus humouring their palates, they ſhould be ſoon in their graves. To this I reply, that nature for the preſervation of a man in years, has ſo compoſed him, that he may live with little food; that his ſtomach cannot digeſt a great quantity; and that he has no need of being afraid of dying for want of eating, ſince, when he is ſick, he is forced to have recourſ

recourſe to a regular ſort of diet, which is he firſt and main thing preſcribed him by his phyſicians. Laſtly, that if this remedy s of ſuch efficacy as to ſnatch us out of he arms of death, it is a miſtake to ſuppoſe, hat a man may not, by eating a little more than he does when he is ſick, live a ong time without ever being ſick.

Others had rather be diſturbed twice or hrice a-year with the gout, the ſciatica, nd other epidemical diſtempers, than to e always put to the torment and mortifiation of laying a reſtraint upon their appeites; being ſure, that when they are indiſpoſed, a regular diet will be an infallible emedy and cure. But let them be informd by me, that as they grow up in years, heir natural heat abates: that a regular iet, deſpiſed as a precaution, and only ooked upon as phyſic, cannot always have he ſame effect or force to draw off the rudities, and repair the diſorders, which re cauſed by repletion; and laſtly, that hey run the hazard of being cheated, by heir hope and their intemperance.

Others ſay, that it is more eligible to eed high, and enjoy themſelves, tho' a han lives the leſs while. It is no ſurprizng matter, that fools and madmen ſhould ontemn and deſpiſe life; the world would e no loſer whenever they go out of it: ut it is a conſiderable loſs, when wiſe, virtuous,

tuous, and holy men drop into the grave
If one of them were a biſhop, he migh
have been an archbiſhop in growing older
if he were in ſome conſiderable poſt in th
ſtate, he might have arrived to the higheſt
if he were learned, or excelled in any ar
he would have been more excellent, an
done more honour to his country and himſel

Others there are, who perceiving them
ſelves to grow old, tho' their ſtomach be
comes leſs capable of digeſting well ever
day than other, yet will not, upon that ac
count, abate any thing of their diet. Thes
only abridge themſelves in the number o
their meals; and becauſe they find two o
three times a-day is troubleſome, the
think their health is ſufficiently provide
for, by making only one meal; that ſo th
time between one repaſt and another, ma
(as they ſay) facilitate the digeſtion o
thoſe aliments, which they might have t
ken at twice: for this reaſon they eat a
this one meal ſo much, that their ſtomac
is overcharged, and out of order, and co
verts the ſuperfluities of its nouriſhmen
into bad humours, which engender diſeaſ
and death. I never knew a man that live
long by this conduct. Theſe men woul
doubtleſs have prolonged their days, ha
they abridged the quantity of their ord
nary food, proportionably as they grew i
year

ears, and had they eaten a great deal leſs, nd a little oftener.

Some again are of opinion, that ſobriety nay indeed preſerve a man in health, but loes not prolong his life: to this we ſay, hat there have been perſons in paſt ages, who have prolonged their lives by this neans; and ſome there are at preſent, who till do: it ſhortens our days, as the infirmiies contracted by repletion do. A man of n ordinary reach may perceive, that, if he leſires to live long, it is better to be well han ſick; and that, conſequently, tempeance contributes more to a long life, than n exceſſive feeding.

Whatſoever the ſenſualiſt may ſay, temperance is of infinite benefit to mankind: o it he owes his preſervation: it baniſhes rom his mind the diſmal apprehenſion of lying: it is by its means that he becomes wiſe, and arrives to an age, wherein reaſon nd experience furniſh him with aſſiſtance, o free himſelf from the tyranny of his paſſions, which have lorded it over him for almoſt the whole courſe of his life. O ſacred and beneficent temperance! how much am I obliged to thee, for ſeeing the time which has ſo many charms, when one follows thy maxims, and obſerves thoſe rules which thou doſt preſcribe? when I denied my ſenſes nothing, I did not taſte ſuch pure and refined pleaſures as I now enjoy.

They

They were then ſo troubleſome, and mixed with pains, that even in the height of thoſe enjoyments, the bitterneſs exceeded the ſweetneſs of them.

O happy ſtate of life! which, beſides other bleſſings with which thou favoureſt an old man, doſt preſerve his ſtomach in ſo perfect a tone, as to make him reliſh a piece of dry bread, better than the voluptuous do all their dainty morſels, and beſt ſeaſoned diſhes. The appetite which thou giveſt us for bread, is juſt and reaſonable, ſince it is the moſt proper food for mankind, when attended with a deſire of eating. A ſober life is never without ſuch an appetite. So that, by eating a little, my ſtomach is often craving after the manna, which I ſometimes reliſh with ſo much pleaſure, that I ſhould think I treſpaſs upon the duty of temperance, did I not know that one muſt eat it to ſupport life, and that one cannot make uſe of a plainer, and a more natural diet.

My ſpirits are not injured by what I eat; they are only revived and ſupported by it. I always find myſelf in an even temper, always chearful, and more ſo after than before meals. I uſe myſelf, preſently upon riſing from the table, to write or ſtudy, and never find that this application of mind, after eating, is prejudicial to me: or, I am equally capable at all times of

doing

doing it, and never perceive myself drowsy as a great many people do. The reason of this is, because, the little I eat is not sufficient to send up the fumes from the stomach to the head, which fill the brain, and render it uncapable of performing its functions.

What I eat, is as follows; *viz.* bread, soop, new-laid eggs, veal, kid, mutton, partridges, pullets and pigeons. Among the sea-fish, I chuse goldenis, and of the river-fish, the pike. All these aliments are proper for old men; who if they be "wise for themselves," would be contented with these, and seek for no other.

A poor old man, who has not wherewith to purchase all these, should be satisfied with bread, broth and eggs; and there is no man, how poor soever he be, that can stand in want of this food, unless they be downright beggars, reduced to live upon alms, of whom I do not pretend to say any thing. The reason of their being so miserable in their old age, is, because they were idle and lazy when they were young; it were better for them to die than to live, for they are a burden to the world. But this we say, that another man in low circumstances, who has only bread, broth and eggs, ought not to eat much of them at a time, but so to regulate himself, with respect to the quantity of his diet, as that he

may not die but by a mere diſſolution. For it is not to be ſuppoſed that a ſtab or the like, is only the violent death; fevers, and a great many other diſtempers, of which one dies in bed, are to be counted as ſuch, being cauſed by thoſe humours, againſt which nature would not ſtruggle, if they were natural.

What difference then is there between a ſober and an intemperate life? the one ſhortens, the other prolongs our days, and makes us enjoy a perfect health. How many of my relations and friends has intemperance carried off, who would have been ſtill alive, had they followed my counſel? but it has not been able to deſtroy me as it has ſo many others; and becauſe I had the power of reſiſting its charms, I am ſtill in the land of the living, and am arrived to a good old age.

If I had not abandoned thee, thou infamous ſource of corruption, I ſhould never have had the pleaſure of ſeeing eleven of my grand-children, all of them witty and promiſing; nor beheld the ornaments which I have made to my houſes and gardens. But thou, O cruel intemperance! doſt often put an end to the days of thy ſlaves before they could have finiſhed what they begun. They dare not undertake any thing that requires time to complete it, and ſhould they be ſo happy, as to ſee

their works brought to perfection, yet they do not long enjoy the fruit of their labours. But to shew what thou really art, *viz.* a deadly poison, the most dangerous enemy of mankind, and wishing that all men may conceive a just abhorence for thee, I promise myself, that my eleven grand children will declare war against thee, and, following my example, will convince all mankind of the abuse of thy cravings, and of the usefulness of a regular course of life.

I cannot understand how it comes to pass that so many people, otherwise prudent and rational, cannot resolve upon laying a restraint upon their insatiable appetites, at fifty or threescore years of age, or at least when they begin to feel the infirmities of old age coming upon them. They might rid themselves of them by a strict diet, and become incurable, because they will not observe a regimen. I do not wonder so much that young people are so hardly brought to such a resolution: they are not capable enough of reflecting, and their judgment is not solid enough to resist the charms of sense: but at fifty a man ought to be governed by his reason, which would convince us, if we would hearken to it, that to gratify all our appetites, without any rule or measure, is the way to become infirm, and to die young. Nor does the pleasure of taste last long; it hardly begins,

but it is gone and paſt: the more one eats, the more one may; and the diſtempers which it brings along with it laſts us to our graves. Now, ſhould not a ſober man be very well ſatisfied, when he is at table, upon the aſſurance that, as often as he riſes from it, what he eats will do him no harm?

I was willing to add this ſupplement to my treatiſe; it is ſhort, and runs upon other arguments: the reaſon of my caſting them into two chapters, is, becauſe the reader will be better pleaſed to peruſe them at twice, than at once. I wiſh all the world were ſo curious as to peruſe both, and be the better for them.

CHAP. III.

A letter to Signior Barbaro, *Patriarch of* Aquileia; *concerning the method of enjoying a complete happineſs in old age.*

IT muſt needs be owned, that the mind of man is one of the greateſt works of God, and that it is the maſter-piece of the divine architect. Is it not ſomething ſurprizing to be able, by writing, to keep up a correſpondence with one's friends at a diſtance? and is not our nature of a wonderful compoſition, which affords us the means of ſeeing one another with the eyes of our imagination, as I, ſir, behold you at preſent?

ſent? it is after this manner that I ſhall enter into diſcourſe with you, and relate to you ſeveral pleaſing and profitable things.

It is true, indeed, that what I have to tell you is no news, with reſpect to the ſubject matter thereof; but I never told it you at the age of ninety-one years. It is ſomewhat aſtoniſhing, that I am able to tell you, that my health and ſtrength are in ſo good a plight, that inſtead of diminiſhing with my age, they ſeem to increaſe as I grow old. All mine acquaintance are ſurprized at it; and I, who know to what I am indebted for this happineſs, do every where declare the cauſe of it. I endeavour all I can to convince all mankind that a man may enjoy a complete happineſs in this world, after the age of fourſcore, and this cannot be attained without continence and ſobriety, which are two virtues precious in the eyes of God, becauſe they are enemies to our ſenſual appetites, and friends to our preſervation.

Be pleaſed then, ſir, to know, that for ſome days paſt, ſeveral doctors of our univerſity, as well phyſicians philoſophers, came to be informed by me of the method I took in my diet, having underſtood that I was ſtill healthful and ſtrong; that I had my ſenſes perfect; that my memory, my heart, my judgment, the tone of my voice, and my teeth, were all as ſound as in my youth;

that I wrote ſeven or eight hours a-day with my hand, and ſpent the reſt of the day in walking out a foot, and in taking all the innocent pleaſures that are allowed to a virtuous man; even muſic itſelf, in which I bear my part.

Ah, ſir! how ſweet a voice would you perceive mine to be, were you hear me, like another David, chant forth the praiſes of God to the ſound of my lyre? you would certainly be ſurprized and charmed with the harmony which I make. Thoſe gentlemen particularly admired, with what eaſineſs I could write upon ſubjects which required a great and earneſt application of mind, and which were ſo far from fatiguing, that they diverted me. You need not queſtion, but that taking up my pen to have the honour of entertaining you to day, the pleaſure which I conceive in ſuch an employment, is more pleaſing and delightful to me than thoſe which I am uſed to take.

Thoſe doctors told me, that I ought not to be looked upon as an old man, ſince all my works and employments were ſuch as were proper for a youth, and did by no means reſemble the works of men advanced in years; who are capable of doing nothing after fourſcore, who are loaded with infirmities and diſtempers, who are perpetually languiſhing and in pain.

That

That if there be any of them who are leſs infirm, yet their ſenſes are decayed; their ſight and hearing fails them, their legs tremble, and their hands ſhake; they can no longer walk, nor are they capable of doing any thing: and ſhould there chance be to one that is free from thoſe diſaſters, his memory decreaſes, his ſpirits ſink, and his heart fails him; in ſhort, he does not enjoy a life ſo perfectly as I do. What they wondered at moſt, was a thing that is really ſurprizing. It is this, that by an invincible ſort of antipathy, I cannot drink any wine whatſoever, during the months of July and Auguſt every year. I have ſo great an averſion to it, that I ſhould certainly die, did I but force myſelf to drink any; for neither my ſtomach, nor my palate can bear it; ſo that wine being as it were mother's-milk to old men, it ſeems as if I could not poſſibly preſerve my life without that nouriſhment. My ſtomach then being deprived of a help ſo uſeful and proper for the maintaining the heat thereof, I could eat but very little, which, about the middle of Auguſt, brought me ſo low and weak, that jelly-broths and cordials could not keep up my ſpirits. However, this weakneſs is not attended with any pain, or pernicious accident. Our doctors were of opinion, that if the new wine, which reſtores me perfectly to my health in the beginning

beginning of September, were not made a
that time, I could never eſcape death
They were no leſs ſurprized to ſee, tha
in three or four days time, new wine will
reſtore to me that ſtrength which I had lo
by drinking of the old; a thing of which
they were witneſſes theſe ſeveral days paſt
when they ſaw me in thoſe two differen
circumſtances, without which they could
never have believed it.

Several phyſicians were pleaſed to prog
noſticate to me, ten years ago, that it wa
impoſſible for me to hold out two or three
years longer with this pernicious antipathy
however, I ſtill find myſelf leſs weak tha
ever, and am ſtronger this year than an
that went before. This ſort of miracle
and the many favours which I receive
from God, obliged them to tell me, that
brought along with me at my birth, an ex
traordinary and ſpecial gift of nature; an
for the proof of their opinion they employ
ed all their rhetoric, and made ſeveral ele
gant ſpeeches upon that head. It muſt b
acknowledged, my lord, that eloquence h
a great deal of force upon the mind o
man, ſince it often perſuades him to believ
that which never was, and never could b
I was very much pleaſed to hear them di
courſe; and could it be helped, ſince the
were men of parts who harangued at tha
rate? but that which delighted me moſt
wa

was to reflect, that age and experience may render a man wiſer than all the colleges in the world can. Theſe are two infallible means of acquiring a clear ſight into things; and it was in truth by their help that I knew the error of that notion. To undeceive thoſe gentlemen, and at the ſame time to inſtruct them better, I replied, that their way of arguing was wrong: that the favour I received was no ſpecial, but a general and univerſal one: that there was no man alive, but what may have received it as well as myſelf: that I was but a man as well as others: that we have all, beſides our exiſtence, judgment, a mind and reaſon: that we are all born with theſe ſame faculties of the ſoul; becauſe God was pleaſed that we ſhould all of us have thoſe advantages above the other creatures, who have nothing in common with us, but the uſe of their ſenſes: that the Creator has beſtowed upon us this reaſon, and this judgment, to preſerve our lives, ſo that this grace proceeds immediately from God, and not from nature, or the ſtars: that man, when he is young, being more ſubject to his ſenſe than to his reaſon, gives himſelf up wholly to his pleaſures; and that when he is arrived to forty or fifty years of age, he ought to know that he is in the midſt of his life, thanks to the goodneſs of his conſtitution, which has carried him ſo far: but

that

that when he is arrived to this period, he goes down the hill apace to meet his death, of which the infirmities of old age are the fore-runners: that old age is as different from youth, as a regular life is oppoſite to intemperance: that it is neceſſary for him at that age, to change his courſe of life eſpecially with reſpect to the quantity and the quality of his diet, becauſe it is on that the health and length of our days do radically depend. That laſtly, if the former part of our lives were altogether ſenſual then the latter to be rational and regular order being neceſſary for the preſervation of all things, eſpecially the life of man, as may be perceived by thoſe inconveniencies that are cauſed by exceſs, and by the healthfulneſs of thoſe that obſerve a ſtrict regimen. In truth, my lord, it is impoſſible for them, who will alway gratify their taſte, and their appetite, not to break their conſtitution; and that I might not break mine, when I was arrived to maturity, I entirely devoted myſelf to a ſober life. It is true, it was not without ſome reluctancy that I entered upon the reſolution, and abandoned my profuſe way of living. I began with praying to God, that he would grant me the gift of temperance; and was fully perſwaded, that how difficult ſoever any undertaking be which a man ſets about, he will attain his end, if he has but reſolution

reſolution enough to conquer the obſtacles to his deſign By this means I rooted out my evil habits, and contracted good ones; ſo that I uſed myſelf to a courſe of life, which was by ſo much the more ſevere and auſtere, by how much the more my conſtitution was become very weak when I began it. In ſhort, my lord, when they had heard my reaſons, they were forced to ſubmit to them.

The youngeſt among them told me, that he agreed that this favour might be univerſal to all men, but that it was very rarely efficacious, and that I muſt needs have a more eſpecial and victorious grace, to get above the delights and cuſtoms of an eaſy life, and embrace one that was quite contrary to it: that he did not look upon it to be impoſſible, ſince my practice convinced him of the contrary, but however it ſeemed to him to be very difficult.

I replied to him, that it was a ſhame to relinquiſh a good undertaking upon the account of difficulties that might attend it, and that the more we met with, the more glory ſhould we acquire: that it is the will of the Creator, that every one ſhould attain to a long life, to which he has appointed man; becauſe in his old age, he might be freed from the bitter fruits that were produced by ſenſe, and might enjoy the good effects of his reaſon; that when he ſhakes

hands

hands with his vices, he is no longer a slave to the devil, and finds himself in a better condition of providing for the salvation of his soul: that God, whose goodness is infinite, has ordained that the man who comes to the end of his race, should end his life without any distemper, and by a pure dissolution, which only ought to be called a natural death, all others being violent, and brought upon men by repletion and excess. That, lastly, God is willing that man should pass by so sweet and easy a death to a life of immortality and glory, which I expect. I hope, said I to him, to die singing the praises of my Creator. The sad reflection that we must one day cease to live, is no disturbance to me, though I easily perceive that, at my age, that fatal day cannot be far from me; that as certainly as I was born so I must die, and that many thousands of younger persons than myself are departed this life before me. Nor am I afraid of the terrors of hell, because I am a christian, and put my trust in the mercy and merits of the blood of Jesus Christ: lastly, I hope that so pleasant a life as mine, will be followed by as happy a death.

To this the young gentleman replied not a word, only that he was resolved to lead a sober life, that he might live and die as happily as I hoped to do; and that though hitherto he had wished to be young,

a long time, yet now he desired to be quickly old, that he might enjoy the pleasures of such an admirable age.

The desire I had of giving you, my lord, a long entertainment, as being one with whom I could never be weary, has inclined me to write this long letter to you, and to add one word more before I conclude.

Some sensual persons give out, that I have troubled myself to no purpose, in composing a treatise concerning sobriety, and that I have lost my time in endeavouring to persuade men to the practice of that which is impossible: that my advices will prove as useless as the laws which Plato would have established in his commonwealth, the execution of which was so difficult, that he could never prevail upon any man to receive them; and that what I have written upon this subject, will meet with no better success. I find this comparison is by no means just, since I practised what I teach a great many years before I wrote upon it; that I would never have put pen to paper, had I not known by my own experience, that this practice was not impossible; that it is likewise very useful, and very prudent; and this was the motive which prevailed upon me to publish it. In a word, I have been the occasion of a great many persons practising it, who find themselves the better for so doing: so that the

laws of Plato have no reſemblance to the advices which I give. But ſuch perſons who deny themſelves nothing, that they may gratify their ſenſe, do not care to give me their approbation. However, I pity theſe men, though they deſerve, for their intemperance, to be tormented in their old days with a complication of diſtempers and to be the victims of their paſſions a whole eternity. I am, *&c.*

CHAP. IV.

Of the birth and death of man.

THAT I may not be deficient in the duty of charity, which all men owe to one another, or loſe one moment of the pleaſure which the enjoyment of life affords I will again write, to inform thoſe who do not know me, of what they who are acquainted with me, have known and ſeen. What I am going to ſay will be looked upon as impoſſible, or incredible; but, at the ſame time, nothing is more certain; it being what a great many know, and what is worthy to be admired by all poſterity. I am now ninety-five years of age, and find myſelf as healthful and briſk, and as airy as if I were but twenty-five years old.

What

What ingratitude ſhould I be guilty of, did I not return thanks to the divine goodneſs for all his mercies reached out unto me? Moſt of your old men have ſcarce arrived to ſixty, but they find themſelves loaded with infirmities: they are melancholy, unhealthful; always full of the frightful apprehenſions of dying: they tremble day and night, for fear of being within one foot of their graves; and are ſo ſtrongly poſſeſſed with the fancy of it, that it is a hard matter to divert them but for a moment from that doleful thought. Bleſſed be God! I am free from their ills and terrors. It is my opinion, that I ought not as yet to abandon myſelf to that vain fear: this I will make appear by the ſequel; and will alſo evince, how certain I am of living an hundred years. But, that I may obſerve a method in the ſubject I am treating of, I will begin with the birth of man, and end with his death.

I ſay then, that ſome bodies are born with ſo bad a conſtitution, that they live but few days, or months. Whether this proceeds from the bad conſtitutions of the parents, or from the influences of the ſtars, or from a weakneſs of nature, which derives this defect from ſome foreign cauſe, is hard to determine: for it is not likely, that nature, as ſhe is the common parent of all mankind, ſhould be guilty of over-

fondneſs to ſome of her children, and c
cruelty towards others.

Since we are not able to diſcover th
true reaſon from whence the ſhortneſs c
our lives proceeds, it is in vain to enquir
into the cauſe of it. It is enough to know
that there are bodies which die almoſt a
ſoon as they are born.

Others are born well ſhaped and health
ful, but of a tender make; and ſome c
theſe live ten, twenty, thirty, or fort
years, without being able to attain to tha
period which is called old age.

Others there are, who bring along wit
them a ſtrong conſtitution into the world
and they indeed get to be old: but the
they are decrepit and unhealthful (a
hath been already obſerved), bringing upo
themſelves all the diſtempers they labou
under, becauſe they truſted too much t
the ſtrength of their conſtitution. The
are unwilling to alter their courſe of life
and make no difference between their be
ing old and young; as if they were to be a
vigorous at fourſcore, as in the flower o
their days. By this means, they neve
correct their conduct, nor make any reflec
tion that they are old; that their conſtitu
tion decays; that their ſtomach loſes ever
day ſomething of its natural heat; and fo
that reaſon, they ought to be more carefu
both of the quality and quantity of wha
thee

they eat and drink. They are of opinion, that a man's ſtrength impairing as he grows into years, he ought to repair and ſupport it by a greater quantity of food: they fancy, that to eat a great deal preſerves their lives; but therein they are miſtaken: for the natural heat beginning to decay, they overcharge it with too much food; and prudence requires, that a man ſhould proportion his diet to his digeſtive faculties. This is certain, that the peccant humours proceed only from an imperfect digeſtion; and there is but a little good chyle made, when the ſtomach is charged with freſh aliments, before it has thrown off the former meal's meat into the inteſtines. It cannot then be urged too often, that when the natural heat begins to decay, it is neceſſary for the preſervation of health, to abate the quantity of what one eats and drinks every day; nature requiring but very little for the ſupport of the life of man, eſpecially that of an old man.

However, inſtead of taking this courſe, moſt old people continue to live as they did formerly. If they had ſtinted themſelves in time, they would at leaſt have arrived to my years, and enjoyed as long a life as myſelf, ſince they brought into the world a ſtrong conſtitution. They might have lived ſo long at leaſt, I ſay; for they might have arrived to ſixſcore, as a great

many others who lived ſoberly have done, whom we have known ourſelves, or have heard of by tradition; provided always, that they had as happy a conſtitution as thoſe people. Had I been as well made, I would not queſtion but I might prolong my days to that date; but becauſe I was born with a tender conſtitution, I cannot hope to live above a century: and even they who are of no ſtronger a make than myſelf, may, by living ſoberly, as I do, eaſily attain to the ſame period.

Nothing ſeems more delightful than this certainty of a long life; whilſt the reſt of mankind, who obſerve not the rules of ſobriety, are not ſure of ſeeing the next day. This expectation of a long life, is founded on ſuch natural conſequences as can never fail. It is next to impoſſible, that he who leads a regular and ſober life, ſhould fall ſick, or die a natural death, before the time that nature has preſcribed: I ſay, he cannot die before that time: becauſe a ſober life prevents that corruption which feeds our diſtempers, which cannot be produced without a cauſe; and if there is no baſe one reigning, there can be no fatal effect or violent death.

There is no queſtion to be made, but that a regular life puts at diſtance the fatal hour of our death, ſince it is able to keep the humours in an exact temperature; whereas

whereas, on the contrary, gluttony and drunkenneſs diſturbs, heats, and puts them into a ferment; which is the origin of catarrhs, fevers, and almoſt all the accidents which hurry us to our graves.

However, though ſobriety, which preſerves us from abundance of diſaſters, may repair what exceſs has impaired, yet it muſt not be ſuppoſed that it will make a man immortal. It is impoſſible, but that time, which effaces all things, ſhould likewiſe deſtroy the moſt curious workmanſhip of nature. That which had a beginning, muſt needs have an end; but man ought to end his days by a natural death, that is, without any pain; as they will ſee me die, when the radical moiſture ſhall be quite exhauſted.

I find this principle of life ſtill ſo perfect in me, that I promiſe myſelf ſtill to be at ſome diſtance from my laſt day; and I fancy I am not miſtaken; becauſe I am healthful and briſk, reliſh all I eat, ſleep quietly, and, in a word, none of my ſenſes fail me. I have ſtill a lively fancy, a happy memory, a ſound judgment, a ſtrong heart; and my voice is more tuneable than ever, tho' the firſt organ that fails, ſo that I can chant forth my office every morning, without any prejudice to my lungs, and more eaſily than I could in my youth.

All

All theſe are infallible ſigns, that I have a great while ſtill to live; but that my life ſhall end whenever it pleaſes God. How glorious will it then be, having been attended with all the happineſs this world can afford, ſince age has freed me from the ſlavery of my paſſions? a prudent and regular old age conquers and eradicates them; prevents them from bringing forth any envenomed fruits, and changes all the ill thoughts which youth inſpires into thoſe that are good.

Being no longer a ſlave to ſenſe, I am not troubled with the thoughts that my ſoul ſhall one day be ſeparated from the body. I am no longer diſturbed with anxious fears and racking cares, nor vexed at the loſs of that which is not really mine. The death of my friends and relations, occaſions no other grief in me than that of the firſt movement of nature, which cannot be avoided, but is of no long continuance.

I am ſtill leſs moved at the loſs of any temporal good, ſo afflictive to a great many perſons. This is only the happineſs of thoſe that grow old by ſobriety, and not of thoſe perſons, who, by virtue of a ſtrong conſtitution, arrive to ſuch an age, notwithſtanding their exceſſes. The one enjoys a foretaſte of heaven, even in this world, whilſt the others cannot reliſh any pleaſure without

without a great deal of trouble. Who would not think himſelf happy at my age, never to be ſenſible of the leaſt inconvenience? a happineſs which ſeldom attends the moſt flouriſhing youth. There are none of them but what are ſubject to a thouſand diſorders, which I know nothing of: on the contrary, I enjoy a thouſand pleaſures, which are as pure as they are calm.

The firſt of theſe, is to be ſerviceable to my country; and how does this pleaſure innocently pleaſe my vanity! when I reflect how I have furniſhed my countrymen with uſeful means, both of fortifying their city, and their port: that theſe works will ſubſiſt for many ages, that they will conduce to the making of Venice a famous republic, a rich and matchleſs city, and ſerve to eternize its fair title of being queen of the ſea.

I have likewiſe the ſatisfaction of having afforded to her inhabitants the means of obtaining always plenty of all things, neceſſary for life, by manuring untilled lands, draining the marſhes, by laying under water, and fattening the fields which were barren by reaſon of the dryneſs of the ſoil, which would otherwiſe have been a work of time.

In ſhort I have rendered the city wherein I was born, ſtronger, richer, and more beautiful

beautiful than ever, as alſo the air more wholeſome; all which is to my credit, and nothing hinders me from enjoying the glory which is due unto me.

My misforttnes having robbed me of a conſiderable eſtate whilſt I was young, I knew how to make amends for that loſs by my care; ſo that without the leaſt wrong done to any perſon, and without any other trouble, than that of giving forth the orders that were neceſſary, I have doubled my income, and ſhall leave to my grandchildren twice the eſtate that I had by inheritance from my anceſtors.

One ſatisfaction which pleaſes me more than all the reſt, is, that what I have written concerning ſobriety, is of great uſe to many, who loudly proclaim how highly they are obliged to me for that work: ſeveral of them having ſent me word from foreign parts, that, under God, they have been indebted to me for their lives.

I have likewiſe another ſatisfaction, the deprivation of which would very much diſturb me; which is, that I write and draw with my hand, all that is proper for my buildings, and for the conduct of my domeſtic affairs.

I likewiſe frequently converſe with men of learning, from whom I daily receive new notices. And it is a wonder, that, at my age, I ſhould have ſo quick parts, as to

learn

learn and comprehend the moſt refined and difficult of ſciences.

But that which makes me look upon myſelf as one of the happieſt of men, is, that I in ſome meaſure enjoy two ſorts of lives; the one terreſtrial, with reſpect to the actions of my body; and the other divine and celeſtial, by the pleaſures of the mind; which are attended with a great many charms, when founded on reaſonable objects, and a moral aſſurance of the infinite good things which the divine bounty prepares for us.

I enjoy then perfectly the pleaſures of this mortal life. Thanks to ſobriety, which is extremely grateful to God, as being the guardian of virtue, and an irreconcileable enemy to vice; and, by way of foretaſte, I enjoy eternal life, by contemplating ſo often on the happineſs thereof, that I can hardly think upon any thing elſe. I look upon death as the neceſſary paſſage to heaven, and am ſo far charmed with the glorious elevation to which I think my ſoul is deſigned, that I can no longer ſtoop to thoſe trifles, which charm and infatuate the greateſt part of mankind. The deprivation of thoſe pleaſures to which I was moſt addicted, gives me no diſquiet; on the contrary, the loſs of them raiſes my joy, ſince it is to be the beginning of a life incomparably more happy.

Who

Who then would be troubled, if he were in my place? however, there is not a man but may hope for the like happineſs, if he would live as I do. For, in ſhort, I am neither ſaint nor angel, but only a man, the ſervant of God, to whom a ſober and regular life is ſo grateful, that even in this world he rewards thoſe who practiſe it.

If all they who retire into monaſteries, to lead there a penitent life, a life of prayer and contemplation, would, to all their virtues, add the prudence of abridging themſelves in their diet, they would become more deſerving, and more venerable.

They would be looked upon as ſaints, by perſevering in their auſterities, and eſteemed as thoſe old patriarchs, and ancient hermits, who obſerved a conſtant ſobriety, and lived ſo long a time. They might very probably obtain, at the age of ſixſcore, ſo much grace, as to be able to work miracles, which they could not do for want of ſuch a perfection, to which they could not arrive before that time. And beſides this privilege, which is almoſt an infallible mark of predeſtination, they would be in conſtant health, which is as rarely to be met with in the old age of the moſt pious monks, as in that of the greateſt part of of the wiſeſt worldlings.

Several of thoſe monks fancy, that God does on purpoſe annex infirmities to old age,

age, to ſerve inſtead of penance impoſed for the ſins committed in their youth. But therein, as I think, they are very much miſtaken. For I cannot imagine how God, who loves mankind, can be delighted in their ſufferings. It is the devil and ſin which brings all the evils we ſuffer upon our heads, and not God, who is our Father and Creator. He deſires that mankind ſhould be happy, both in this, and the other world: his commands tend to no other purpoſe; and temperance would not be a virtue, if the benefit it does us by preſerving us from diſtempers, were repugnant to the deſigns of God in our old age.

In ſhort, if all the truly pious were ſober, Chriſtendom would be as full of ſaints as in the primitive times; nay, they would be more numerous, becauſe the number of chriſtians is increaſed ſince that time. How many venerable doctors might edify others by their wholeſome preachings and good examples? how many ſinners might receive benefit by their interceſſions? how many bleſſings might they ſhower upon the earth? Theſe monks in obſerving the maxims which I profeſs, need not fear acting contrary to thoſe of their rule.

There is not one that forbids them the uſe of bread, wine and eggs; ſome alſo permit them to eat fleſh. Beſides theſe things, they make uſe of ſallads, pulſe,

fruit, cakes, which are prejudicial to ſome ſtomachs. Becauſe theſe meſſes are offered to them in the refectory, they may perhaps be afraid of tranſgreſſing their rule if they ſhould abſtain from them. However, they would have done better, if, thirty years ago, they had abſtained from that diet, and contented themſelves with bread, wine, broths and eggs, which are the beſt food a tender body can take. Would not this be better than the nouriſhment of the ancient fathers in the deſart, who drank nothing but fair water, did eat only wild fruit, herbs, and raw roots, yet lived a long time without infirmities? our Anchorets would likewiſe find a more eaſy way to heaven, than thoſe of Thebais.

I will conclude all with ſaying, that ſince extreme old age may be ſo uſeful and pleaſant to men, I ſhould have failed in point of charity, had I not taken care to inform them by what methods they might prolong their days. I have had no other motive in writing upon this ſubject, than that of engaging them to practiſe, all their lives, a virtue which would bring them, like me, to a happy old age, in which I will not ceaſe to cry, live, live long, to the end you may ſerve God, and be fit for the glory which he prepares for his elect.

CHAP

CHAP. V.

Being a letter from a nun of Padua, *the grand-daughter of* LEWIS CORNARO.

LEWIS CORNARO was, by the ill conduct of ſome of his relations, deprived of the dignity of a noble Venetian, of which he was poſſeſſed, and which he deſerved for his virtues, and by his birth. He was not baniſhed from his country, but was free to remain in Venice, if he pleaſed; but ſeeing himſelf excluded from all the public employments of the republic, he retired to Padua, where he took up his reſidence.

He married at Udine, a city of Friuli; his wife's name was Veronica, of the family of the Spilenbergs. She was a long time barren, and, as he ardently wiſhed for children, he neglected nothing which might give him that ſatisfaction. At laſt, after many vows, prayers and remedies, his wife became pregnant, and was delivered of a daughter, who was named Clara, becauſe of the devotion which each of them had for St Francis.

This was an only daughter, and was married to John Cornaro, ſon of Fantin, of the family of that name, which was diſ-

tinguiſhed by the ſirname of Cornaro del Epiſcopia. It was a very powerful family, before the loſs which Chriſtendom ſuffered by loſing the kingdom of Cyprus, where that family had a conſiderable eſtate.

Clara had eleven children, eight ſons, and three daughters. LEWIS CORNARO had alſo the pleaſure to ſee himſelf, as it were, revived by miracle, in a great number of ſucceſſors; for though he was very ancient when Clara came into the world, yet he lived to ſee her very old, and his offspring to the third generation.

CORNARO was a man of underſtanding, merit and courage. He loved glory, and was naturally liberal, nevertheleſs without profuſeneſs. His youth was infirm; being very paſſionate and haſty; but when he perceived what damage the vices of his temper cauſed him, he reſolved to correct them, and had ſtrengh enough over himſelf to conquer his paſſion, and thoſe extravagant humours to which he was ſubject. After this glorious victory, he became ſo moderate, mild, and affable, that he gained the eſteem and friendſhip of all that knew him.

He was extraordinary ſober, and obſerved the rules which he mentions in his writings, and dieted himſelf always with ſo much wiſdom and precaution, that finding his natural heat decaying by degrees, in his

his old age, he alſo diminiſhed his diet by degrees, ſo far as to ſtint himſelf to the yolk of an egg for a meal, and ſometimes, a little before his death, it ſerved him for two meals.

By this means he preſerved his health, and was alſo vigorous, to the age of an hundred years; his mind did not decay; he never had need of ſpectacles, neither loſt he his hearing.

And that which is no leſs true than difficult to believe, is, that he preſerved his voice ſo clear and harmonious, that at the end of his life he ſung, with as much ſtrength and delight, as he did at the age of twenty-five years.

He had foreſeen that he ſhould live long without any infirmity, and was not deceived in it. When he felt that his laſt hour drew near, he diſpoſed himſelf to leave this life with the piety of a chriſtian, and the courage of a philoſopher. He made his will, and ſet all his affairs in order; after which he received the laſt ſacraments, and expected death patiently in an elbow-chair. In ſhort, it may be ſaid, that being in good health, feeling no manner of pain, having alſo his mind and eye very briſk, a little fainting fit took him, which was inſtead of an agony, and made him fetch his laſt breath. He died at Padua the 26th of

April, 1566, and was buried the 8th of My following.

His wife died ſome years after him. Her life was long, and her old age as happy as that of her ſpouſe, only her latter days were not altogether like his. Some time before her death, ſhe was ſeized with a lingering diſtemper, which brought her to her grave. She gave up her ſoul one night in her bed without any convulſive motions, and with ſo perfect tranquillity, ſhe left this life without being perceived.

This is all I can ſay of thoſe good people, by the idea which remains of them, from what I heard my deceaſed father, and ſome other friends of LEWIS CORNARO, ſay of them, who having lived ſo long after an extraordinary manner, deſerve not to die ſo ſoon in the memory of man.

CHAP. VI.

Authorities taken from the hiſtory of M. de Thou, *and the dialogues of* Cardan, *concerning the method of prolonging a man's life, and preſerving his health.*

THE extract of the 38th book of the hiſtory of Mr preſident de Thou runs thus:

"LEWIS

"LEWIS CORNARO was an extraordinary and admirable instance of a long life; for he lived an hundred years, healthful in body and sound in mind. He was descended from one of the most illustrious families of Venice; but, thro' some misfortune owing to his birth, he was excluded from all honours and publick employments in the state. He marry'd at Udine, in Friuli, one Veronica, of the family of Spilemburg; and being in possession of a good estate, he was very desirous of having children to inherit it. In short, what by the prayers he put up, and by the help of physicians, he conquer'd the point; and his wife, whom he dearly lov'd, and who was pretty well gone in years, was brought to bed of a daughter, when he least of all expected it. This daughter, named Clara, was married to John, the son of Fantini Cornaro, a rich family of Cyprus, by whom she had eight sons, and three daughters.

"In a word, LEWIS CORNARO, by his sobriety, and the regimen he observed in his diet, corrected the infirmities he had contracted by intemperance in his youth; and, by the strength of his reason, moderated his inclination and propensity to anger: so that in his old age he had as good a constitution of body, and as mild and even tempered a mind, as before, in

the

‘ the flower of his youth, he was infirm and
‘ apt to fly out into a paſſion. He compo-
‘ ſed ſeveral treatiſes when he was very
‘ old; wherein he tells us of the irregula-
‘ rity of his former life, and of his reforma-
‘ tion, and the hopes he had of living long.
‘ Nor was he miſtaken in his account: for
‘ he died calmly, and without any pain,
‘ (being above an hundred years old) at
‘ Padua, where he had taken up his reſi-
‘ dence. His wife, almoſt as old as him-
‘ ſelf, ſurvived him; but within a ſhort
‘ time after, died a very eaſy death. They
‘ were both buried in St Anthony's church,
‘ without any pomp, according as they had
‘ ordered by their laſt will and teſtament.’”

In the dialogue of Cardan, between a philoſopher, a citizen, and an hermit, concerning the methods of “ prolonging a man's life, and “ preſerving his health;” Cardan introduces the hermit diſcourſing thus:

“ Whereas in ſolid nouriſhments, and
‘ even in drinks, there are ſeveral things
‘ worthy our obſervation; *viz.* their na-
‘ tural qualities, and thoſe which they ac-
‘ quire by the ſeaſoning of them; the
‘ order and the time wherein we ought
‘ to make uſe of them, without mentioning
‘ the quantity of thoſe very aliments and
‘ drinks; it is not without reaſon, that the

‘ queſtion

'question is asked, which of these things is 'to be regarded most?

"Some have declared themselves for 'the quantity; maintaining, that it has in 'effect a greater share than any other thing, 'in the preservation of health and life.

"The famous LEWIS CORNARO, a 'noble Venetian, was of this mind. He 'treated on this subject at the age of 'fourscore, enjoying then a perfect sound-'ness of body and mind. This venerable 'old man, at the age of thirty-six, was 'seized with so violent a distemper, that 'his life was despaired of. Ever after that 'time he took care to eat just the same 'quantity every meal: and tho' he was 'not free from a great many fatigues, and 'some misfortunes, which occasioned his 'brother's death; yet the exactness of his 'regimen preserved him always in health, 'with an entire freedom of mind.

"At seventy years of age, a coach (in 'which he travelled) was overthrown, by 'which he was dragged a great way, and 'wounded in his head, and one of his legs 'and arms put out. The physicians de-'spair'd of his recovery, and were for ap-'plying a great many remedies to him: 'but CORNARO tell us, that being well 'satisfied of the temperature of his hu-'mours, he rejected all the assistances of 'the physicians, and was quickly cured.

"Nine

" Nine years after, when he was almoſt
' fourſcore, his friends, and his very phy-
' ſicians, adviſed him to add two ounces
' to his ordinary diet. Within ten or
' twelve days after, he fell ſick; the phy-
' ſicians gave him over, and he himſelf be-
' gan to fear the worſt; however, he re-
' covered his health, tho' with much ado.

The ſame author adds, " that being
' fourſcore years old, his ſight and hearing
' was ſound and good; that his voice held
' ſtrong; that he ſometimes ſung in con-
' cert with his grand-children: that he
' could either ride, or walk a-foot very
' well; and that he compoſed a comedy,
' which came off with applauſe.

" This wiſe old gentleman was then of
' the opinion, that a regular and ſmall
' quantity of food contributed more than
' any thing elſe to the preſervation of
' health; for he makes no mention of his
' choice of diets. I am uſed, ſays COR-
' NARO, to take, in all, twelve ounces of
' ſolid nouriſhment, ſuch as meat, and and
' the yolk of an egg; and fourteen ounces
' of drink. It is to be lamented, that he
' did not preciſely tell us, whether he took
' this quantity at once, or twice a day:
' however ſince he tells us, that he did
' eat but a very little, it ſeems as if he did
' ſo but once a day.

" The

"The famous civilian, Panigarolus, 'who lived above ſeventy years, though 'of a very weak conſtitution, never eat or 'drank above twenty eight ounces a day; 'which comes almoſt to the ſame quantity 'of CORNARO.

"I was intimately acquainted with one, 'who never took above thirty-ſix ounces a-'day. It is true, indeed, that every fort-'night he purged himſelf; bnt he lived 'to above ninety years of age.

"It ſeems then, as if CORNARO was 'minded to keep from us a perfect know-'ledge of his regimen, and only to tell us, 'that he had found out an extraordinary 'one; ſince he has not informed us, whe-'ther he took the quantity he ſpeaks of 'at once, or twice a day, nor whether he 'altered his diet; for he treats on that 'ſubject as darkly and obſcurely as Hip-'pocrates.

"It is likewiſe ſtrange, that the quanti-'ty of his liquid ſhould exceed that of his 'ſolid diet; and the rather, becauſe what 'he did eat was not equally nouriſhing, 'ſince he took yolks of eggs, as well as meat. 'In truth, to me he ſeems to talk more 'like a philoſopher, than a phyſician."

Thus far Cardan: but, by his leave, if he had read what CORNARO has written concerning a ſober and regular life, with attention, he would have paſſed a ſounder judgment

judgment on his writings; for, in them, he not only ſpeaks of the quantity, but, in expreſs terms, diſcourſes of the quality of our diet.

Maxims to be obſerved for the prolonging of life.

IT is not good to eat too much, or to faſt too long, or to do any thing elſe that is preternatural.

Whoever eats or drinks too much will be ſick.

The diſtempers of repletion are cured by abſtinence.

Old men can faſt eaſily; men of ripe age can faſt almoſt as much; but young perſons and children, that are briſk and lively, can hardly faſt at all.

Growing perſons have a great deal of natural heat, which requires a great deal of nouriſhment, elſe the body will pine away: but old men, who have but a little natural heat, require but a little food; too much overcharges them.

It muſt be examined, what ſort of perſons ought to feed once or twice a-day, more or leſs; allowance being always made to the age of the perſon, to the ſeaſon of the year, to the place where one lives, and to cuſtom.

The more you feed foul bodies, the more you hurt yourſelves.

FINIS.